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LEAVES FROM THE LIFE

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

LEAVES FROM THE LIFE

OF A

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

BY

JOHN AUGUSTUS O'SHEA

Oh, combien des Auteurs les destins sont heureux!
Quels que soient leurs talens, leurs plaisirs sont extrêmes
S'ils sont bons, le Public alors est content d'eux;
Sont-ils mauvais? N'importe! ils sont contens d'eux-mêmes.

L'Abbé Dourneau.

With a Portrait of the Author.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CHAPTER I.

The Passion Play hackneyed—On the Road to Ober-Ammergau—A Lake Trip—Pretty Scenery—Fellow Voyagers—The O'Leary from Cork—The Aborigines—A Rustic Beau Nash—At the foot of the Bavarian Alps—Seizing a Shandradan at Seeshaupt—A Picturesque Postilion and a Plodding Team—Bits of Mountain Beauty—The Cow-bells—Bavarian Characteristics—Murnau—"Ja, Ja!"—In the Happy Valley.

THE Passion Play is a hackneyed subject now. Previous to my account of it in the *Standard*, the first and longest which ever appeared in a newspaper, it had only been known to readers of English by allusions in a novel by the Baroness

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Tautphœus (an Irish lady by birth), by a graphic criticism in Miss Howitt's *Art Student in Munich*, and by an article in *Blackwood*, from a gentleman who visited the hamlet in 1860.

Of my account, it will be enough to say that I was complimented by one correspondent on my familiarity with patristic lore, that a good-natured Jesuit copied it in full in a journal he edited and solicited the prayers of his readers for my conversion as I was evidently a fair-minded sinner, that an astute compiler of books cribbed it wholesale and spoiled it in the cribbing, and that I was presented with a very acceptable douceur by the authorities of Shoe Lane on my return. I recall this with the livelier recollection that it was the only tribute of the nature ever rendered me.

Since 1870 the Passion Play has been done to death by writers and scribblers of all orders. One good volume about it has been

produced, *the* volume—a luxuriously brought-out history of the entire function, its origin and surroundings, with the text and admirable photographs of the leading performers and most artistic groupings—by Mr. J. P. Jackson, of the *New York Herald.* Those who wish to master the subject, and can afford a ten-pound note, should get that volume in preference to all others. My friend made no pecuniary profit by the work, but he has the inexpressible felicity of knowing that the King of Bavaria approved his labours, assented to have the book dedicated to him, and possesses a copy of it. That copy he never paid for, but he might have given Mr. Jackson the Saint Louis or the Maximilian Joseph, that is. if Mr. Jackson would have condescended to wear such gewgaws.

It was my lot to visit Ober-Ammergau (sometimes shortened to Ober-Au) again in 1880, but as the primary purpose of these memoirs is to

amuse, not to bore, I will ask the reader to accompany me on my first journey to the district, when everything was fresh, and when my mind was more impressible. That journey was delightful. We started from the "Four Seasons" at half-past five in the morning, a jovial party. There was Professor Agassiz, of Cambridge, likewise a reverend graduate of Cambridge, U.S.A., who had come up from Florence to take a look at the spectacle from an ecclesiastical point of view, Mr. and Mrs. Margárine, of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania—fictitious names, of course—a Mr. O'Leary, from Cork, somewhere in Ireland, Herr Marr, a fine old man, who was playing a leading engagement at the Hof-und-National Theater, the Duc de Maccaroni-Minestra from the Two Sicilies—fictitious name again—and Freiherren and Grafen beyond the power of memory unaided by Stokes to recall.

"We shall have a high old time of it," said Mr. Margarine. And so we had.

Ours was the first train to Starnberg. The locomotive ran us down to the edge of the Starnberger See in about an hour and a half, and there a small steamer, with the blue and white flag of Bavaria fore and aft, and a pink pennon streaming from the main, lay on the mirror-like lake awaiting us. We boarded the *Maximilian*, as the boat was called; a horn was blown, and we were off towards the other extremity of the little inland sea.

"Call this a lake?" said Mr. Margarine; "why, sir, in our country we should be ashamed to call it a pool!"

However, the Mississippi with its tributaries to the contrary notwithstanding, the charm is not always in size; a small pearl is more precious than a boulder of quartz, and the Starnberger See is a pearl among lakes. Its waters, of a limpid blue, are surrounded by gentle wood-crowned slopes; and the boughs of the trees

on the promontories that jut in here and there on its fringe coyly dipped, as if anxious to take a bath that hot day, or admiring their own reflected proportions. The wealthy citizens of Munich much affect its borders as sites for their country residences during summer rustications, and have lined them with pretty *châlets* of the Swiss pattern and cottages like those one sees in the background of set scenes in the opera. The King has a seat somewhere among those dark firs, and so had Hackländer, the most popular and prolific of modern German story-writers. We moved placidly over the still expanse in our flat-bottomed vessel, so tidy and sprightly with its clean decks and gaily-painted bulwarks, its bunting, the bronze figure of Bavaria at its prow, and the three small brass guns, for no other apparent earthly purpose than to frighten away crows, for who could be so cruel as to associate gunpowder with such an oasis as this

for any more serious purpose? There was great variety in our passengers, and room for much speculative observation of a pleasant if not a strictly improving kind. A pair of monks, crop-haired, their heads covered with sombre skull-caps and sombre-hued but slightly shabby cowls hanging over their sombre-hued and decidedly shabby soutanes, circled as to the waists with ropes that dropped in a slatternly way to their sandals, moved their fingers along the beads of a rosary as their lips moved in prayer. Did Mr. Margarine know to what community they belonged? The American muttered under his teeth something about superstition and the dark ages, but Mr. O'Leary, from Ireland, brightened up as if he had hit upon a good thing, and said he feared they could not be "monks of the screw" as ours was a side-wheel steamer.

Not far from the enigmatical ecclesiastics, but still far enough to show there was a line of de-

marcation between him and them, was a secular priest, with coat long in the skirts, and the Roman collar annexed in England by the Ritualists. He stood on his dignity, this clergyman; at the very least, I concluded he must have been a doctor of divinity. In any case, he did not mix with his humbler brethren of the cloth. But the clerical element was not the only one represented. We had ladies, neat, fresh-complexioned, Bavarian ladies in good case, with flaxen hair, and plenty of it (their own, mind), topped by the queerest wee hats of straw, looking for all the world like platters turned upside down, and trimmed tastefully with ribbons of scarlet velvet. Camp stools were around in plenty for all who chose to sit. The Duke de Maccaroni-Minestra, of the former Kingdom of the Two Sicilies—he refused to recognise United Italy—took one, and sighed for a *gelato* as the steward went round with tankards of beer. The sun was broiling, roasting,

grilling,—a sun to fulfil various culinary feats, and the oleaginous Mrs. Margarine calculated that if this v'y'ge were in America there would be an awning or some other fixin' of the likes, anyhow. Mr. O'Leary, for his part, would be perfectly content as it was, if there were only a bagpipes in the cargo. A bagpipes to his mind implied dancing, and dancing implied perspiration, and perspiration was good for opening the pores, and expelling bad humours from the body! We had several of the indigenes with us, crones with coloured kerchiefs tied round their heads, aged mountaineers puffing leisurely out of genuine German pipes with huge porcelain bowls, and hardy young mountaineers in the costume of the district, round hats, short blue jackets, and velveteen breeches, with serviceable spatterdashes meeting them in a friendly way at the knees and establishing a cordial alliance for the defence of the nether extremities. The dandies amongst

them carried feathers jauntily in their hats, and had big flat buttons of deer's horn or pewter to their waistcoats, and embroidery on their terminations. One, the Beau Nash of the lot, had the initials of his name done in thread on the right side of his breeches, and the handle of a dirk in silvered metal peeping from the pocket underneath. On we glided, each new turn of our course revealing new beauties. Now we were fairly in the centre of the lake, could see to its furthest limit, where a sight burst on the view that surprised us with its grandeur. A precipitous wall of mountain lifted itself between us and the horizon, a line of jagged peaks undulating into twenty queer shapes, the deep blue of the bold hills, as distinguished from the lighter blue of the clear sky, being relieved by irregular patches of white, where the snow of last winter, hidden from the jealous warmth of the sun, lay virgin in cleft and crevice.

These were the Bavarian Alps—not those terrible Alps Hannibal is said to have cut through with vinegar, and Bonaparte crossed on a mule—but still members of the Alpine chain, and rich in the stern attractions of the family. I looked at them with an unfeigned admiration, when Mr. Margarine broke on my mood with the abrupt observation:

"No, sir, they ain't a show to our Alleghanies!"

Forgive me if I almost censured Christopher Columbus for having lived. Yet can Mr. Margarine fairly be blamed for having regarded one of Nature's finest handiworks from the standpoint of one who had struck oil? Have you ever heard Michael Faraday's description of his first view of the Alps?

"We soon entered among the mountains, they were of limestone, stratified very regularly."

But we were nearing Seeshaupt after an

easy passage over the twelve miles of the Starnberger See; three shots from the brass guns announced our arrival; we drew up in a foot and a half of water beside a wharf where piles of wood for firing were banked up, a rustic gangway was run out to us, and Mr. O'Leary, from Ireland, was the first to touch firm earth.

Seeshaupt was the last stage on our journey. Placards had been posted on the walls of Munich announcing that Herr Guweilea Thomas, at No. 29 on the Marienplatz, had return tickets to Ober-Ammergau for sale, at five florins, and four-and-twenty kreutzers; but that was a privilege of cheapness not to be enjoyed by foreigners. The natives had seized on these tickets as if each represented the great prize in a lottery. On landing at Seeshaupt the lucky people had nothing to do but to step on to the omnibuses awaiting them. We, who were not lucky, had to rout up the keeper of the post-house, seize

bodily on a tumble-down dusty vehicle of the species cabriolet that lay in the corner of his yard, and enter his stable in search of a horse. We were happy enough to find two, a stout pair of chestnuts that looked as if they had been more accustomed to the fields than the roads. However, any horse, even to a plough horse, is welcome in an emergency.

We got under way about eleven o'clock, the postilion, a gentleman in embroidered blue jacket, silver-banded hat, and immense tasseled boots promising to get us to our journey's end before five. The plough-horses got on better than I expected, that is, at the commencement, owing to Mr. O'Leary having taken the precaution to give the gaudy postilion what he termed "a spur in the head." The beasts lashed their tails and shook their manes, and altogether put on an appearance of spirit that sadly deceived us. In Bavaria the horses carry no blinkers,

a violation of English usage which gives them an air of wildness to the English eye. But our wild-looking animals turned out as great a disappointment as the "fiery untamed steed" which used to be brought on the stage at Astley's when Miss Mazeppa Menken was to be treated to her equine ascension to the flies. However, we had some consolation; the day was gloriously fine, and the country through which we were passing was one to put a cynic in a good humour. The road ran first over an undulating plain—was a mere track, in fact, unprotected by hedge, wall, bank, or ditch; then it plunged into a shady grove, and emerged on a smiling land from which a splendid view of the gradually nearing mountains was obtained. Corn-fields alternated with fragrant orchards, and by-and-by we got into more pastoral scenery, and herds of small cows, the colour of barm, strayed in Indian file on the highway. Copper

bells were attached by a thong of leather round the necks of these cattle, and as they moved a tinkle was kept up which was very agreeable as variety to the traveller who came upon them at intervals, but which must be as great a nuisance to the poor beasts themselves as the perpetual Italian organ proved to Mr. Babbage. Anon rose the hum of bees, and the gardens at the extremity of a village shed their odours at either side. The cottages in the hamlets of the Bavarian Upperland are generally built and roofed with wood and ornamented with balconies. Their gables are turned to the front; they are many-windowed, as if their architects set much store by light—and were they not right?· The twitter of friendly swallows was frequent from the shelter of the overhanging eaves, and the porches were rich in trelliswork interlaced with flowers and leaves, so that altogether they presented a most picturesque aspect, and told the tale of cheerful,

tasteful, happy inhabitants. Now and again we passed by a shrine, a statue of the Virgin inserted in a niche in the wall, but more usually a crucifix in a sort of penthouse fixed on a tree-stump. The crucifix is a specially popular symbol; it is to be met with in every room of every cottage, and a large figure of the Saviour on the Cross, in ebony or plaster, looks down on the traveller from a corner of the public room in every ale-house.

On by lines of poplars and pear trees in full white blossom we went, until the little town of Murnau, at the foot of the mountains, was reached. The postilion unyoked his team, and we entered the best inn. The place was crowded to excess with pilgrims for the *Passions Schauspiel* like ourselves; eating and smoking and chatting were going on, yet it was in the large room of this thronged inn, directly over the mirror, that a bird had chosen to build its nest. Feathered

visitors came in for an afternoon call occasionally, fluttered their wings over the tables, looked at themselves in the mirror before they alighted above it, had a friendly peck, and flew away. I began to think well of the Bavarian mountaineers. Those who are hospitable to the feathered creation, as a rule, cannot be cruel to their brethren. I had left my opera glass and top-coat in the carriage, in the open street, not one to watch them, a tempting bribe to theft. They were not touched, and Mr. Margarine, I fear, was rather displeased; at all events, he expressed himself that "this people did not know enough to be thieves." Numbers of those we came upon at Murnau were stopping there for the night, and intended to go on to Ober-Ammergau early on Sunday (the following) morning. Not a bed was to be had there, they assured us, for love or money—it was folly to continue on. Nevertheless we held to our

purpose, and stirred up our driver to get ready, while we improved the occasion to take a look at the town-fountain, the statue of the Virgin treading a serpent under foot, in the middle of the main street, and the church of the parish, where Mr. Margarine was eased of six kreutzers by a couple of aged and pious female mendicants, who returned him double the value in prayers.

The Royal Bavarian shandradan (as Mr. O'Leary persisted in calling our vehicle) did not leave Murnau for full an hour, though our driver had promised us that we should be on the road in ten minutes. But objurgation and entreaty are alike thrown away on German postilions. To every command to hurry up, no matter in how guttural an accent pronounced, the Deutschlander in jack-boots replies by a philosophic "*Ja, ja,*" but he never stirs one whit the quicker. He is determined to go

through life easily; even if he were invited to dinner by St. Peter himself I do believe Mein Herr would be announced as the walnuts were being cracked over the wine. "*Ja, ja,*" said our superb Jehu (that fellow must have been an honorary member of the Humane Society, he took such care of his horses)—"*Ja, ja,*" and he lit a fresh cigar, and looked at the little world of Murnau through the smoke. After we had well-nigh sworn as terribly as our army did in Flanders, the pair of chestnuts turned up, we turned into the trap, the postilion turned his whip on the backs of his horses; immediately both kicked, one of them over the traces, and we were near to having another turn still—a turn over. The creatures, it appeared, had had a feed of oats, and the unaccustomed luxury had got into their heads. At last we were off at a spanking pace, but the drag had shortly to be put on as we came to a

giddy slope just at the foot of the mountains. We had eminences to ascend in number afterwards, by way of compensation. Crossing a brisk stream, we skirted a great fir-sided hill, and got into a region of enchanting irregularity, revealing new charms at every turn. There were hills to the right, and hills to the left, and hills in front, huge rocks ribbing their sides; here a mass of gneiss, there a projecting block of trap, and anon a dark clump of pines, short, and shooting straightly upwards, and by-and-by the tapering spire of a church refreshed us with the promise of arrival.

But, no, that was not yet Ober-Ammergau; we had a clamber up the side of a steep mountain, by the edge of a gorge, through which rushed a noisy whirl of waters. The road was dark from an umbrageous screen, and our vehicle toiled wearily zigzag after us, the horses occasionally pausing for a rest at ruts dug so as to

catch the wheels and prevent them from rolling back. Hot and breathless we reached the top of the ascent opposite a spacious pile of masonry, once the Benedictine monastery of Ettal, now transformed into a brewery, and there, low beneath us, was the goal of our journey—honest, kindly, wholesome Ammergau.

Hemmed in by the eternal mountains, their ridges clothed and their fissures streaked with snow, Ober-Au is a small world of itself, secluded and self-contained. In the dip of the vale the Ammer ripples along its pebbly bed, a clear, fresh, chilly brook, sending back diamond rays of light as the sun-shafts touch its surface. By its side winds the road, fringed with mountain ash. In the fields and lower slopes the grass is emerald green, and in their midst nestle the quaint, gable-fronted, wooden-roofed cottages. The almond-hued blossoms of peach trees peep whitely from under their leafy cowls, there are

twining and trailing honeysuckles by many a window, the air is fragrant with the scent of thyme and lilac and budding haws, and from the distant meadows steals faintly upon the ear the tinkling of copper cow-bells, filling the spirit with a sense of dreamy Arcadian repose. The church with its bulbous spire is in keeping with the scene. At one extremity of the village, that farthest as one enters from Ettal, is the theatre of the *Passionspiel*, sentinelled by tall tufted poplars, gently swaying in the soft breeze. The environing hill-sides are thickly clad with clumps of fir, and the hill-tops are "hearsed with pines." To the south-east frowns the lofty dolomite peak of the Kofel, with its fantastic summit crowned with the emblem of man's redemption. This is the framing of the decennial picture. What better could be wished or invented? Mantle it in a golden May-glow distributed from the overarching sky, which is

usually a serene azure cope with shimmering cloudlets floating over it like capricious thistle-down, and if you are not gratified to enthusiasm you are to be pitied.

CHAPTER XII.

The Passion Play in Fulfilment of a Vow—Its Origin and Emendations—The Open-Air Theatre—Revision of the Sacred Drama—The Coryphæus—A Specimen Tableau—"The Man of Sorrows"—Accuracy of Costume—Christ in the Temple—"Only Twenty-nine Pieces of Silver"—The Virgin Mary—A Vivified Page from the New Testament—The Agony—Painful Realism—Descent from the Cross—Jewish Objection to the Resurrection Scene—Sticking to the Text.

THERE can be no question that the Ober-Ammergau Play is in fulfilment of a vow. The story of the vow is this. In 1633 a terrible plague, caused by the wars of Gustavus Adolphus, ravaged the district. Such was the rate of mortality that in Kohlgrul, but three hours' journey off, only two married couples were left alive. The people of Ammergau, in mortal terror of their lives,

established a sanitary cordon to ward off the visitation. But a day labourer, one Caspar Schuhler, who had been working at Eschenlohe, an infected spot, managed to evade the watchers, and penetrated into the village, where his wife and children dwelt. The second day after his arrival he was a corpse. He had brought with him the seeds of the disease, which spread like wildfire, and in three weeks swept away no fewer than eighty-four persons. The mourners besought the Almighty to have pity on them, and registered a vow that if He heard their prayer, they would represent every ten years, "for thankful remembrance and edifying contemplation, and by the help of the Creator, the sufferings of Jesus, the Saviour of the world."

The prayer was heard, so runs the tradition, "for not a single person died of the plague after the vow was made, though many were smitten with it." In 1634, the promised *Pas-*

sionspiel was first played; in 1680 the decennial period was chosen for the representation, and ever since it has been repeated with as much regularity as the conditions of society tolerated.

Now, as to the date of the construction of the play, it is obvious that it must have been anterior to 1634. It is not likely that ignorant peasants would make a vow to enact something totally unknown to them, and which, even as labour of love, exacts much study and careful rehearsal. The learned Dr. Hyacinth Holland, of Munich, is of opinion that the play was introduced into Ober-Au coevally with wood-carving, which would be about the twelfth century, and for both acquisitions he thinks the monks of Rothebuch are to be thanked. The pastor, D'Otmar, revised the ancient text considerably, and the schoolmaster, Roehus Dedler, amended the music; but to the pastor Daisen-

berger, who gave the expurgated text now rendered at the desire of Ludwig I., to the churchwarden, Zwink, who arranged the tableaux, and to the schoolmaster Schauer, who superintended music and rehearsals, is due the perfectness of the performance which draws to this obscure nook in the Alps so many men of so many nations.

Previous to 1830, the play was produced in the churchyard in the open air, but a special theatre was erected for the accommodation of actors and public in 1840; still, it was not till ten years later that the work was placed upon the pedestal it now holds, and achieved the reputation of a masterpiece. The playhouse, which is run up with boards, is partially open to the sky, like the ancient Greek theatres and the summer theatres of Italy. The auditorium is capable of seating from 5,000 to 6,000 persons. The stage exhibits five distinct spheres of action:

first, the proscenium for the chorus and processions; second, the central stage for the *tableaux vivants* and dramatic scenes; third, to the right of the proscenium, Pilate's house, and to the left the house of Annas; and fifth, branching away on either hand, the streets of Jerusalem. The proscenium is roofless, but the central stage is protected from the elements, and on a tympanum in front are painted symbolic figures of the cardinal virtues, surmounted by the pelican feeding her young from the breast, the whole on a ground of blue sky studded with stars. This artistic attempt, like every other accessory, is an effort of local ability; even the music is composed by a *maestro* of the village, whose ashes mingle with mother-earth in the graveyard hard by, and is simple and sweet.

The drama is divided into a prologue, three *Abtheilungen*, or parts, and an epilogue. The first part embraces seven acts, and extends from

Christ's entry into Jerusalem to His betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane. The second part comprises seven acts, and pictures what happens from the captivity in Gethsemane to the condemnation by Pilate. In the third, of four acts, we are brought down to the Ascension. Each act is subdivided into *Vorbilder*, or tableaux, explained by the chorus, and the *Handlung*, or action, of the drama.

The chorus consist of eighteen villagers of both sexes, who have for duty to expound the various scenes, and prepare the audience for what is to arise. They come in from right and left to the front of the stage, and are attired in gauze surplices with classically-draped coloured mantles over them and an under robe of merino, extending to their sandalled feet. With their abundant locks clasped by golden coronals, their golden waist-belts, and their gaze half-dreamy, half-demure, they look like the full-length angels

(bar the wings) in the old Biblical paintings. The coryphæus was a man of imposing presence, calm of mien, amply bearded, and with an aspect of nobility in his features, and of dignity in his deportment. With voice clear and resonant as a silver bell, punctuating every word with his right hand, he delivered the prologue, and the tone was at once taken up by the entire chorus, either in solo alternately, or in unison, until the curtain over the central stage was pushed back right and left. This address was an epitome of the aim of the drama. At its close the chorus joined in, and asked all present to attend to what was to be displayed to them—the holy mystery of the sacrifice made for men by the Saviour, whose death on Golgotha was their salvation.

The chorus then filed off to each side, so as to open a view of the first tableau. It may be as well to give a description of this (which is

called "Paradise Lost"), as a specimen of the rest. The Garden of Eden is shown with its blooming apple trees in the foreground, one of which, laden with a crop of rosy fruit, a serpent sinuously clinging to a branch, cannot be mistaken for other than the Tree of Knowledge. On a knoll in the centre stands the angel with the flaming sword, threateningly uplifted—a youth in undulating garb of blue and white, with the imprint of peremptory but sad warning on his countenance. Our first parents are typified, Adam by a burly man with a fleece around his loins, every muscle of his strong limbs visible under flesh tights, and a wild confusion of straw-tinted hair, coarse and matted, adding to the despairing horror of his lineaments; Eve by a shame-faced woman with tangled golden tresses, cowering under a bush nearer to the garden gate. The group is motionless as so many wax figures, and though it rests before us while the chorus

set forth in verse the significance of the scene, there is not a stir. As the curtain slowly falls the chorus resume their places at what would be the foot-lights, and the coryphæus announces the glad tidings of salvation, and then himself and attendant spirits quietly move back.

There is a second tableau, before the actual mystery opens to triumphant strains. The first act is most effective, bringing before us the procession which ushers the chief character of the play into Jerusalem, amid the Hosannas of the fickle multitude, which afterwards joined in the yell "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

The "Man of Sorrows" was represented, almost unexceptionably—quite unexceptionably, if one could throw off the impression that all representations of the kind must savour of irreverent familiarity. Joseph Meyer, the villager entrusted with the part, is about the age and figure that correspond with it; he is tall, of an imposing

presence, with expressive olive features. His fine forehead rises over eyes full of quiet melancholy, and the same serious, almost suffering expression is borne out by the entire cast of countenance, and by the delicately-formed lips shaded by a pencilling of black moustache and bordered by a wealth of beard that gives him a singular resemblance to the portrait of the Saviour by Rubens. His rich dark hair, parted in the middle, added to the illusion which was created by his entire look and gait, his outward seeming of moderation, virtue, and self-denial. He entered on an ass, and when he alighted the illusion was unbroken; every step and attitude had a majesty about them, the tones of his voice were musical and the enunciation most distinct. He was clad as the Christ is clad in most of the altar-pieces of the churches in southern countries, in a violet robe and an outer garment of amaranth. The utmost accuracy was aimed at in the attire of

the Jewish priests and doctors of the law, who burst in on the rejoicings of the crowd and reviled the Galilean. Caiaphas was gaudily appareled. His garb was one shine of gold on ground of satin; on his breast was displayed the traditional plate, fashioned after that worn by Aaron—a piece of glitter some ten inches square, containing twelve precious stones in four rows, on each of which was engraved the name of one of the tribes of Israel. This breastplate was fastened to the ephod, a sleeveless vest of fine linen, with purple, blue, and scarlet interwoven; then he had his upper vestment of blue with pomegranates wrought upon it, and on his head a mitre of fine linen with a yellow plate bearing the Hebrew inscription of "Holiness to the Lord" in front, and two sickle-like cornua tapering from the top. The Rabbis wore robes of black with *birettas*, both bound plentifully with bands of gold;

others had head-gear that reminded one of the "mortar-boards" of our universities, and others again the pannikin-shaped hat of the modern French bar, while the get-up of raiment of body and covering of head of not a few was decidedly suggestive, with one exception, of the bazaar in Cairo; there were caftans, turbans, and the conical caps of Persia, but not a solitary fez. This will be sufficient to show that there is due attention to costume in this performance by villagers.

There could not have been less than three hundred persons on the stage, mixed in a most elaborately devised confusion. The action of the welcome takes place on the fore-stage; but, in the recess behind, the interior of the Temple is represented, with its money-changers and dealers in full swing of business activity. Christ enters, drives them out with the cord of His girdle, upsets their tables, and scatters their money. A realistic colouring is given to the episode by the

escape of three doves, from the upturned basket of a bird-seller. "My house is a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves" — the very language of the Book — is cast by the Saviour at the retreating herd as He re-enters on the stage. The multitude renews its hosannas for the King that cometh in the name of the Lord "lowly and riding upon an ass"; the Pharisees with their ostentatious phylacteries raise their shouts of "Moses is the only prophet," and their followers in their garments fringed and tufted on the border, the *ignobile vulgus* of Jerusalem, join in the howl. The crowd divides into two factions, the partisans of the old order of things on one side, the followers of Christ on the other, the "Man of Sorrows" takes leave of the people previous to His departure for Bethany, and the curtain drops down right and left.

The chorus re-enter, and their leader gives

a recitative explaining the next tableau, always taken from the Old Testament, which is followed by that episode in the New, of which it was the prefigurement. Thus, the piece, in effect, was a series of Scripture object-lessons, and was more useful as a source of information that could be understood and retained by the uneducated than could be supplied by a month's reading of books or hearkening to sermons.

The heavy man, if one may be allowed such an expression in this connection, was splendidly sustained. Judas was leading villain in frown, and low and fawning accent and cat-like step. A villain redeemed by a grand, almost heroic remorse as he strung himself by his girdle to the bough of the blasted apple-tree. He was clad in the traditional saffron robe, and the outraged peasants could hardly restrain themselves from hissing their execration as he snatched up the blood-money—the accursed shekels. Young

Count Pappenheim, son to the lord of the manor, who sat by me, whispered as the money was counted out to him: "They have given him only twenty-nine pieces?" I preferred the criticism of the rustics.

A modest country belle they chose to play the risky *rôle* of Mother of Christ—a rosy creature with a finely chiselled contour of face, a row of pearly teeth, soft brown eyes and brown hair confined by a blue nun-like veil. Round her forehead a white band was worn, and under her chin a broad *guimpe* of linen, like those used by the inmates of Roman Catholic cloisters. Her gown, which fell in graceful folds, was of the colour we know as solferino, though to get rid of the apparent anachronism, we must suppose there was some other name for the hue in Jerusalem. The acting of the Virgin in the little she had to do was marked by thoughtfulness and matronly reserve. Her voice had in it a

thrill of exceeding womanly softness. The one point in which she failed—in which, indeed, most of these village artists fail—was in her movements. They were not—to be critical—exactly sylphlike, but ever so little heavy, as those of people accustomed to carry burdens.

The first *Abtheilung* finished about noon, when there was an hour's interval to permit the spectators to seek refreshment. At one o'clock, a cannon-shot, swelling into an artillery salute in the repercussions from the mountains, summoned them back. This second act of the Mystery kept up its interest, but the third, that in which "it is consummated," was shorter in text than those that preceded, but fuller of what play-acting people call business. The Way of the Cross was there depicted. So woefully impressive was this and the great scene—the execution of the Man God, as if he were rankest felon—that I am tempted to treat them rather fully.

As the curtain rises on a country landscape, a young man comes on to the forestage—Simon the Cyrenean. He pauses, hearing a noise from the street to the right, hesitates, but resumes his journey, and is turning in the direction of the tumult, just as the procession which had caused it comes on the scene, headed by a Roman soldier, mounted on a dapple-gray horse, bearing the Imperial standard. A centurion, the *bâton* of command in his right hand, marshals a body of troops, who escort the Saviour as he totters under the weight of the Cross. The guards who are immediately beside him keep brutally goading him, although he nearly sinks to the ground at each step. Four executioners, clad in yellow jerkins and carrying adzes and hammers and baskets, with other tools of their horrid trade, on their shoulders, pace beside Christ; and behind this party come the two thieves, guarded, and dragging along their

crosses, while a Jewish rabble follows, hooting and mocking, and ever pressing forward. The procession halts a moment, the Saviour being so completely overcome that He is unable to carry the Cross a yard further. A soldier roughly accosts Simon, takes him by the shoulder, and shoves him under the Rood, when the procession again moves onward. Meanwhile, some of the wives of Jerusalem, with infants in their arms, emerge from a side street, and, with tears in their eyes, compassionate our Lord, who addresses them in the memorable words of Scripture beginning, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me." As the procession passes on towards the hill appointed for the execution, the Virgin Mary, bent with sorrow, slowly enters, accompanied by John and Magdalen, and follows its course in the distance. This whole passage —one of the most painful in the Iliad of our Lord's suffering—is put on the boards with a

force that brings it home to the senses as if it were a scroll from passing life that was being unfolded. I have seen the progress of Rysoor to the stake under the Spanish tyranny in the Netherlands, in Victorien Sardou's drama of "Patrie," as rendered on a great theatre by one of the first French actors, and with all the accessories of art that a full exchequer can command; and, frankly, its blue fire was pale compared to the acting of these humble wood-carvers and peasants.

The terrible ending is now approaching. There is no longer an audience but a congregation. The chorus, on entering for the sixteenth *Vorstellung* (which is entitled "Jesus at Golgotha"), have changed their bright-coloured mantles for sable, and wear mourning wreaths instead of the gilt circlets. They sing to a soft musical accompaniment an invitation to the audience to come with them to witness the last suffering of Him who

redeemed us by His blood. This is rendered more solemn and striking by the muffled sound of hammering which is heard from behind. On the music ceasing, the curtains are withdrawn, discovering "the Place of the Skulls." The two thieves are already impaled, their arms turned back and tied over the arms of the cross. Our Saviour is nailed on the Holy Rood, which lies on the ground, but is immediately lifted to its position. It was the painting that Albrecht Durer drew, vivified under the clear canopy of God's sky. How true in every detail!—the mocking soldiers, the executioners going in a tradesman-like way about their business, the centurion, formal as a veteran adjutant (for him it was only an incident in the round of duty); the standard-bearer, sternly still on his gray steed; the mob, such a mob as hungered under our own gallows-trees when they bore their fruit; and then the writhing thieves, and the Figure in the

midst, the thorn-crowned head drooped to one side in beautiful resignation, the limbs immobile because of the fortitude that made them rigid under pain, the arms outstretched in torturing tension, gouts of crimson staining the mid-palm where the sharp nails had been driven in through flesh and sinew to the wood. On the board over the head of the Crucified were legible the words, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Nothing that is related in Holy Writ was wanting: the filling of the sponge with vinegar and conveying it to His lips on a branch of hyssop to quench His thirst, the conversation with the thieves, and the conversion of one of them; the division of His outer garment by the executioners, who tore it into four parts and then threw dice for the seamless robe; and the spear put to the side, when forth gushed a quick spout of blood and water. The

legs of the thieves were broken by resounding blows of india-rubber clubs, which gave the process a repugnant reality, and their limp bodies were taken down from the respective crosses and borne away. Mary came in, with her Magdalen and others and John; the legacy, "Woman, behold thy son," "Son, behold thy mother," was given; then there was the cry of "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani,*" and all was over, as a messenger, rushing in affrighted, announced that the veil of the Temple was rent asunder. The Virgin, red-eyed, dropped sobbing to John's shoulder, and Magdalen, her long blonde locks floating downwards, knelt, clasped the foot of the Rood and embraced it.

The descent from the cross was not similar to that shown in the celebrated picture of Rubens in Antwerp. Joseph Meyer had been in his painful position for three-and-twenty minutes. Depending for support on a bracket for his feet,

a disguised ligature at his waist, and a band at the back of his head, while the arms were kept extended by clamps of iron bending over the fingers and connecting them to the timber; he must have had a strong trial to his nerves and powers of endurance. The cross is some twelve feet high. He told me his position on it for such a length of time was very fatiguing to the muscles of the chest, and by the wished-for moment when he is taken down his hands are quite blue and bloodless and the arms numb, as when one happens to have got a limb under him in sleep so as to impede the circulation. His removal from the cross had to be performed very gently, to obviate the danger of an attack of apoplexy from the sudden return of the blood to the channels which had been shut against it. A ladder was placed at the back and another in front. A man got up on that behind, took away the crown of thorns, and

drew the clamps. Joseph of Arimathea, mounting on the steps of the ladder, handed up the folds of a fine linen cloth; these were passed under the arms, and by degrees the body, looking terribly inanimate, was lowered, the process of embalmment with unguents was gone through, and then, still inanimate, it was slowly borne away. And then came from the spectators, as from one man, a deep respiration, as of a strong swimmer recovering his breath after a lengthened dive.

At the return of the chorus they had removed their funeral cloaks, and were arrayed in festal mantles. The Jews in the auditorium, of whom there were many, left at this point, lest they should give even the tacit sanction of their presence to the Resurrection, which was next analogically typified. Of the grouping generally in the tableaux, I may safely say Gustave Doré himself could not have displayed a finer instinct

had he been charged with it. Some artists, I hear, had been actually giving hints to the pastor of the village as to the placing of the characters, which, I am glad to say, he very properly did not receive with thanks.

"Here," they urged, "it would be effective if the Virgin fell in a swoon by the cross."

"Gentlemen," he answered, "the Scriptures tell us she *stood*, and to that I hold."

The very last scene of the *Passionspiel*, the climacteric of which had been reached before the Jews left, was a rather too theatrical attempt at reproducing the impossible—the ascent of the Glorified. This might have been done by the wire arrangements of Enea, the flying dancer, but it would have been more stagy still, unpardonably tricky, and would have replaced the sentiment of earnest awe by one of startled inquiry. The congregation would have relapsed into an audience; reverence would have given

way to the mood of those who are set a riddle. As the church clock struck five, the chorus poured forth a jubilant final Hallelujah! and the Mystery was over.

CHAPTER III.

Life in the Mountains—The Ammergauers off the Stage—Obtrusive Civilisation—The Christus in Private Life—The Players outside the Village Inn—"Judas Iscariot" at Home—We Foregather—Imitation of Henry Irving—Death to the Miscreant Spy!—An American Notion—The Writer visits the Lock-up, and is gratified with a Vision of Beauty.

I SPENT weeks in Ober-Au, made myself one with its inhabitants, partook of their fare, shared in their amusements, respected their prejudices, and never did I spend more innocent and healthful weeks. My first night I was overcharged; but the Burgomaster hearing of it called on me, rebuked my hostess, earnestly impressed upon me that she was not a native of Ober-Au, and procured lodgings for me in a large house which had been converted into a succursal of the inn. I had

that house all to myself for days, and never went to the trouble of latching my bedroom door or shutting the hall-door, even at night. His Grace of Maccaroni-Minestra, who was supposed to sleep in the room next me, but a thin wooden partition separating us, took an unholy attachment to the zither, and nearly drove me to distraction by his perseverance in twanging its strings. I am charitable, and only hope his fingers did not suffer less by the operation than my ears. By crafty eloquence I succeeded in persuading him that the zither was only to be learnt properly in Vienna, and that the ladies there had moist red lips and large liquid eyes. So the duke went. Herr Marr had to get back to his acting at Munich. Rollicking O'Leary, who kept the house in an uproar during his stay, was off to the Austrian frontier; and that dear couple, the Margarines, hied them away, as they had to do the grand

tour before their return westwards, and were evidently travelling against time. I know bilious visitants have been there since, and have cried, "'tis all barren." Well; what of that? Those who have pulp instead of marrow in their backbone, and object to sleep except on eider-down, should tarry by the ingle.

For dwellers in the mountains, the Ammergauers are tall, well-formed men, muscular and broad-shouldered. Their arms are developed by their practice in wood-cutting. It would astonish Mr. Gladstone to observe with what ease and skill they wield the axe, splitting up huge trunks of pine as if they were match-wood, and shaping the timber with the rude implement as if with the sharpest of chisels and of planes. Their lower limbs are as sinewy as those of the Scottish Highlanders, and owe their size and strength to the same cause—exposure to the air and exercise on the heights. They are good-

tempered, but full of courage, and they know how to fight when roused. The first regiment of Bavarian infantry was raised in the neighbourhood, and showed what mettle was in it at the desperate battles round Orleans in the Franco-German war. It is the usage for the peasants to stick a feather in their Tyrolean hats with the curve inclining backwards, but when there is a quarrel, the victor is entitled to turn his feather with the curve to the front, and he sports his badge of defiance until his crest is lowered by a better man. A keen hunting-knife is carried in a sheath — but is seldom bared, for these strong fellows are anything but bullies; still, as a measure of precaution, the policemen go about with bayonets fixed on their slung rifles.

The maidens of Ober-Au are more strenuous than delicate. They are pleasant-faced, squarely-made, and big-boned. Their great beauty is

their luxuriant hair. These maidens do not suffer from the megrims, but they do toss off their beer without affectation, and lift weights that would tire the arms of a drayman. There is conclusive evidence as to the salubrity of the village, in the fact that there is not a doctor there. But civilisation has crept in, nevertheless. I was awakened one morning by a veritable Hatton Garden hurdy-gurdy; a German band, on the model we know so well, tortured my ears at breakfast later; and a native was sometimes to be noticed with his portable camera-obscura, planted by a telegraph pole, hiding his head under a blanket.

Naturally I cultivated the acquaintance of the actors of the Passion-Play, all natives of the parish. He, who had reverently embodied "The Man of Sorrows" in the Mystery, sanctified my chamber with his presence after the function, and accepted a glass of wine from me

with much pressing. Badly he needed it, poor fellow. Albeit he has the name of being the champion strong man of the country side, he was pale and fatigued, after his nine hours on the boards, as well he might be. He told me he had not tasted bit or sup the whole day long; he had felt the responsibility of his part so much that he had lost all appetite. A mild, unassuming man I found him, and exceedingly gentle in his manners, as if he felt that one who had been selected to personate Christ should try to resemble Him in demeanour. He is a poor carver of wood, this Joseph Meyer, and—this I learned from others, not from himself—finds it hard to live, even in this cheap place, by sending the little works of art fashioned by his cunning hand every eight days to some emporium for their sale in Baden-Baden, which emporium, I am certain, coins the sweat of his brow into gold. The old old rhyme that Virgil

wrote, "*sic vos non vobis,*" recurred to me; not for themselves do birds make nests and bees gather honey; not for themselves do sheep bear wool and oxen groan beneath the wain. I have taken quite a liking to this rustic sculptor—amiable and prepossessing that he is, and with such a thoroughness and sincerity does he identify himself with the character he enacts and withal so unaffected is he in his triumph. But so, indeed, are all. The handsome long-haired lad, who was St. John when I had last seen him, took off his hat to me as we passed in the village street, and did not look in the least like one of those moody strollers, who stalk heroically for a week after they have murdered Richard III.; the modest maiden, who consents to play the Magdalen for the nonce, gave me a gracious smile from over her washing-tub, as I leant at the door-stoop to ask a light; and as I sat writing came the deep voice of

the Apostle Peter, borne in with the vesper-song of the thrush through the honeysuckles that fretted my window. He is sitting at a table in the open air on the grass-plot by the village inn. Half-a-dozen companions and fellow-actors are with him, and the discussion as it floats up to me is on the Mystery. Comments are exchanged in friendly spirit over glasses of homely beer, and now the youth, who attended at the Paschal feast, is being "coached" in his part by somebody who is more at home in the niceties of German pronunciation than he. Hark! is not that the voice of Herod, in cordial greeting to Simon, the Cyrenean? And, as I push back the honeysuckles to take a peep out of my casement, the pretty niece to Caiaphas, who takes in my letters at the post-office, and is so proud of the French she speaks, nods salute, and hopes the creosote she gave me last night cured my toothache. I can resist no longer, for towards

the party glides the lovely Josepha Flunger, the Virgin Mary, in close conversation with Judas Iscariot, the treacherous rascal. I must go down and make high fellow with such an illustrious company; besides have I not to treat myself to the pleasure of a promised talk with Peter on the infallibility of the Pope?

A careworn, lean man, narrow of chest, round-shouldered, under middle height—of collected mien, with long, thin chestnut locks and shaggy beard —that is Iscariot. Then glorious John Dryden thou art set at naught, for the hair of this Judas is not fiery-red, like that of Ferguson, of Godmersham, but of the dissembling colour the divine Will gives to Orlando.

I came to know him intimately afterwards, for I lived under his roof on my second visit. He is a wood-carver, like Meyer, and although he is very expert with his tools, he cannot earn more than five-and-twenty marks a week at best

of seasons. With his patient handiwork he fashions crucifixions, shepherds, the Swiss Family Robinson, mandolin players, and other subjects, out of the soft white wood. But his masterpiece is a figure of himself in his robes as the Betrayer, a pucker on the seamed brow, a scowl on the sharply-chiselled face, his left hand closed over the fibula of his mantle, and his right clutching the purse with the blood-money. The figure, about six inches high, is before me at the moment. I gave him eight marks for it. The portrait is faithful, the pose natural, and full of passion, but there is something wrong with the proportions. In fact, Judas is of the stature of Chang, the Chinese giant. As an actor, he is magnificent, but his conception of the miscreant, who sold his master for thirty shekels—£3 11*s.* 6*d.* of our money—has in it too much of *bonhomie.* Judas was a sneak, a hypocrite, a dastard; but in this Judas there is

ever the latent suspicion of better things, and when he hung himself to the apple-bough, speaking for myself, I was moved less to horror than to pity. But this is not the fault of the simple handicraftsman, Gregor Lechner. The part was not written by him; he was assigned to it, and in his rendering he goes by the traditions. Besides, is he not a frank, honest, God-fearing man?

I was happy in the house of Iscariot, communing with his family till the hour of rest, and mounting to my clean couch, with its double feather-beds, by a trap, which I shoved up with my head like a midnight assassin in a Victorian melodrama. Iscariot and I became friends and talked, and as he worked at the unformed wood, I smoked, and we both drank the good brown ale, and, by-and-by, his wife—a pinched, miserly, shrewish woman, the Xantippe to this Bavarian Socrates—walked off in an ill-dissembled huff as

he laid down his stand and stylus, and began to unbosom himself. He had been with some of his friends to sup with the King—an honour that; but it did not turn this peasant's head: he treated it as the most natural act of courtesy in the world. He showed me the photographs of friends, and the many tributes of affection for himself and admiration for his art, with a beaming pride akin to that of Jasmin when he expatiated on his store of gifts to Miss Costello. He tells me with pride that his son, who is in the choir of the church, and in the orchestra at the theatre, shows great talent for drawing, and then he relates, in his animated way, and with quick sparkling eyes, how Devrient, the German tragedian, on his death-bed, had charged his sons to go to the Passion Play, and to mark the acting of Judas. When I heard this, the good brown ale must have mounted to my head. I took up a rug, folded myself in it, and showed

Lechner how Henry Irving played Shylock, and how he would play Iscariot. I am not modest, so I will say that Lechner was amazed. So most likely would Henry Irving have been, had he been there.

Judas has his feelings. He merges the individual in the character he represents on the stage; but off the stage, and his tankard of good brown ale in his hand, the man—the simple, kindly carver of the hamlet—re-asserts himself.

"Ah, *mein Herr*," he says, "some of these rude boors mistake me, and their boots are very thick. I was stopped by a group of half-drunken peasants as I came home from Ettal one evening. They recognised me, and shouting, 'There goes the miscreant spy,' they would have beaten, perhaps killed me, if I had not taken to my heels."

"That was a proud tribute to your art, O Gregor!" ejaculated I, between two puffs of my cigar.

"Truly, yes; but had I been killed, my name would not have figured in the book of martyrs, and the *frau* would have been left a poor widow!"

He likewise made some complaint of a lank American artist, who had come to the photographic stall, and asked for a set of likenesses of the chief actors in the Passion Play.

Amongst others, one was handed him of Judas. "I don't want that—not I," he said; "that man must be real mean to play the part so well."

When Lechner heard the story, he went into a corner, and burst into tears.

My curiosity had been piqued by a house apart, at the end of the long winding street, No. 110, the first as one enters the village from Munich. The host smiled as he put on his coat with horn buttons and green facings, and carelessly fixing his hat on his unkempt locks, told

me he would go there with me, and explain all about it. He bade me look in through the windows. I saw a bare room with a truss of straw in an angle. And then a surprise broke upon me. It was—like the hurdy-gurdy, the German band, and the perambulatory photographic apparatus, another token of civilisation—even a lock-up. Not much of a public edifice. A London cracksman would laugh it to scorn. The door was secured by a hasp, and the windows bolted with laths. The legend goes that a mischievous tramp was shut in there once. When his turnkey went to call him to his veal cutlet in the morning, the mischievous tramp had disappeared, leaving no address. It was lucky he had not taken the lock-up with him.

While we were inspecting the prison, lo! the lessee of the Gravity Theatre in the Strand of the British metropolis, approached; a tall young lady, with such soft brown eyes, and such silky brown

hair, leaning on his arm. He wished to buy some of Iscariot's work, and to Iscariot I delivered him, and roamed up towards the craggy hills.

CHAPTER IV.

Hints to Pedestrians—An Illustrious Stranger—Ludwig the Second—A King playing Phantom Horseman—Practical Jokes of Royalty—Mid-day Opera—The Bavarian Monarch and Prussia—Pseudo-Artistic Prowls—The True Artist Soul—A Circus Proprietor's Criticism—Frank Vizetelly—Liebig on Wine.

It was with reluctance I parted from the toy-village in that happy glen of the Bavarian Tyrol. Shouldering my knapsack, I started at early morning before the mouse-hued kine were turned out into the pastures, and trudged alone up the gentle slope to Ettal, and thence down the wooded steep of the hill to Murnau—a long tramp on an empty stomach, especially as the sun came out as I descended from the mountains. I was dry in the throat, dust-covered, and un-

comfortably warm. Entering the inn, I ordered a half-pint of brandy and sallied out to the yard, where I rubbed it into my hair and got an ostler to pump on my head until I was refreshed. I mention this triviality, as it may be useful to youngsters on a walking-tour. It will often avert a feverish cold. Here are a few more hints which may be serviceable. In seasons of extreme heat, the nape of the neck is the part most essential to be protected. A leaf of cabbage or other green-stuff, placed inside the hat or cap, is one of the best of non-conductors. It is wiser to rinse the mouth than to drink; it is easier to walk in shoes with heels level with the sole than in high-heeled shoes; and one of the safest remedies for blisters is to run a woollen thread with a darning-needle through the bleb, cut it short at both ends and leave it there. To lower the temperature of the entire body, an excellent plan is to touch

the lobe of the ears with any cold liquid; it sends an immediate chilling quiver through the frame. If you tire, hum a song or imagine you are heading an army; as the end of the day's march approaches, moderate your pace so as to gradually cool down; and when you are at ease in your inn, if you are sensible, order a bowl of coffee. Real aromatic coffee, I mean, not the decoction passed off as such too often in England. The secret of good coffee is no more recondite than this: the berry should be ground the day the brew is made.

As I entered the common room of the hostelry, the same in which the birds had settled over the looking-glass, to order breakfast, I noticed that there was but one person other than myself there. He was a slenderly-built young man, dark-haired and dark complexioned, of regular intelligent features, and was clad in a rather more refined edition of the local costume.

For the life of me I could not think of the German for stewed onions, and I had a hankering for them. The stranger interposed, and asked if I understood French. To my answer in the affirmative, he said:

"Can I be of any service to you? I perceive you are at a loss for some word."

Having explained my quandary, he obliged; the handmaiden left to do the needful, and we fell into chat. He asked me was this my first visit to the Bavarian Highlands. I told him it was, frankly explained why I had come, expressed my delight at the Passion Play and at its setting of landscape, and my liking for the people. He drew nearer to me, smiled, and his face lit up as he said:

"Ah! you like life in the mountains. So do I. I am so pleased to meet one who feels as I do. You are going away; but surely you will come again. See," leading me to the window,

"that break in the hills yonder, I am building a château away up there; it commands some gorgeous views, and I should like to point them out to a kindred spirit."

A man in ordinary dress appeared at the door and announced that the carriage was ready.

My urbane acquaintance bowed and left, and a moment afterwards I saw a rough cabriolet drawn by two horses rattling off at a hard gallop.

"Pray, who is that gentleman?" I asked the handmaiden, as she entered with my breakfast.

"I thought everybody knew him," she said astonished. "That is His Majesty, Ludwig the Second!"

Multifarious are the anecdotes—fables some of them, I verily believe—told of the King. He is a misogynist, a hater of court ceremonials, yet withal a man who stands upon his dignity; an enthralled lover of music and mountain scenery,

and a great stickler for the autonomy of Bavaria. He will not have it Prussianised at any price. His favourite seat is a hunting lodge up in the mountains. It is said that he sleeps in a large lofty room with the ceiling painted to represent the firmament, and a practicable moon shedding a mellow light from one quarter of the artificial heavens. The perspective is managed so as to give the illusion of spaciousness, and through the distant trees cut out in the canvas, as he reclines, may be heard the plash of falling waters. Their lullaby hushes him to sleep. Mecænas had a fondness for the same soporific. Sometimes, His Majesty rises in the night, has a black steed saddled, and dashes off at whirlwind speed up and down the hill roads—which are well kept for that reason—like a phantom horseman pursued by some relentless decree of the supernatural powers. The finest stud in Bavaria is to be found in his stables,

but the cattle are cast soon and often: they are thoroughly worn-out and broken-down after a very few years in the royal service. He plays practical jokes on his retinue sometimes. It is related of him that a Minister arrived in hot haste once to crave an audience on important business of State. The King was out hunting the chamois, but by some chance the Minister succeeded in catching up the party. Ludwig preceded him to a gamekeeper's hut, where he sometimes took lunch, and went in telling him to attend him. The Minister waited one hour, two hours, and at last losing patience and fearing that his Royal master had been attacked by some sudden illness, forced in the door. No King was there. He had made his exit by a window at the back, and was away on the high hills in pursuit of the game.

In the capital His Majesty often commands an opera—generally one by Wagner, for whom

he has as strange a predilection as a predecessor on the throne had for Lola Montes — and this opera is produced in the middle of the day. The theatre is darkened, and nobody is admitted to the auditorium but himself. If he is pleased, he sends the prima donna, not a bracelet nor a ring, but a bouquet of flowers plucked by his own hands. He once had *Lohengrin* enacted on the Starnberger See, the borders of the lake having been illuminated *à giorno* at his expense. When the war with France broke out, he was displeased, but dare not attempt to stem the tide of universal German feeling. However, he declined to go to the front, and withdrew himself to his beloved solitudes while the stirring events which led to the building of the German Empire were firing the world with excitement. At the close of the duel of Titans, the Crown Prince of Germany came to Munich to pass the victorious Bavarians in gala review. The King

fled again to the mountains. He knew the popular commander would receive an enthusiastic greeting, and he did not choose to play second fiddle in his own capital to any domestic foreigner.

He takes a deep interest in the Passion Play, and when Joseph Meyer was drafted into a fighting contingent, he gave strict orders that he should be detained at Munich and employed as a clerk in the War Office. The village of the Mystery lost its own share in that conflict which brought mourning to so many humble firesides in the Fatherland, and of the actual performers two or three who had speaking parts in 1870 were killed in the field or succumbed to their wounds.

I suppose it is a heretical admission to make, but I make it nevertheless—I did not visit the churches and other architectural piles of Munich in rotation. I did not even bother to go to

the outskirts to look at the colossal statue of Bavaria. This species of pseudo-artistic prowl which some tourists religiously undertake, book in hand, under the impression that they are amusing themselves and improving their minds, is dolorous sham. Silly drivellers, they affect raptures they do not feel, and form their opinions from their Murray or Bædeker. How, for example, can one judge of a picture on which some master has lavished genius, love, and time — life's most precious treasure — in a ninety seconds' stare through a quizzing glass? How, indeed? The feat is impossible. And when one encounters these impostors of both sexes at table, oh! the pert glibness with which they prate of this and that, the convinced and oracular confidence with which they deliver their verdicts (adapted from a guide book) on art, Shakespeare and the musical glasses. Their chatter has the same effect on the nerves as the squeaking scratching of a slate-

pencil over a slate. And all the time one knows in his heart of hearts, that to these impostors —if they would but tell the truth and shame the devil of conventionality—the shot-tower by Waterloo Bridge is a much more handsome and impressive structure than Cleopatra's needle. 'Fore Heaven, now that I think on it, that shot-tower is a noble and a graceful sky-piercing spear of masonry.

There are those who have the artistic soul, and those who have not. Of the former class was that poor girl, daughter of the Baron Gros, who was found dead one day at the base of the statue of the Apollo Belvedere in the Louvre. Says Soame Jenyns somewhere

> Few, like Pygmalion, doat on lifeless charms,
> Or care to clasp a statue in their arms.

She did, sad maiden, and who will dare to pronounce her death unhappy? There may have been joys most exquisite, hope full-blooming,

and golden glimpses into the beyond of love perfected, in the last ecstatic swoon and sigh of dissolution. She may have been what the faculty calls mad, but that does not militate against my theory. Of the class which has not the artistic soul, are negroes, warriors of the Salvation Army, and three-fifths of those who stroll through the rooms of the Academy Exhibition. An anecdote occurs to me. There is a circus proprietor of my acquaintance, and he once ordered an enormous poster from a firm of Scotch chromo-lithographers. It was to represent the parade, that is the open-air procession before the performance of his show, in all the colours of the rainbow, and a few others. The order was executed faithfully and well. But he was dissatisfied.

"What is this here great blank, these daubs of blue and white at the top?" he asked.

"That is the sky, and a well-drawn sky, too, if you will allow me."

"Hang it, sir, I am not going to advertise the sky. I paid you to advertise my show. Dror a few camels and stick them up there. I ain't a-goin' to have all that good space run waste."

Now, that man had not the artistic soul, but he had more honesty in him than half the modern tourists who shoot by fixed routes over the Continent, and chatter magpie anent what they have seen. He who would really enjoy himself and acquire some useful knowledge of a strange city, should set out on his walks with no set plan, except not to be in a hurry. He should agree with Pope that the proper study of mankind is not books, or canvases, or stone, but man and woman. If a building strikes him as fine, admire it for itself, and not for its having been built by some famous architect. The fact that those proportions were designed by plain Jones, does not make them less symmetrical than if they had sprang from the brain of Inigo

Jones. If I like a picture, I sit down before it in all respect; I give it every fair play; I let it permeate my being, and I people its perspective with visions, before I ask whose picture is that? If it is by a greater god of the brush, my self-love is flattered; if not, then, I know I have discovered one of Gray's purest gems in the dark ocean cave of neglect.

The man with the truest artistic soul I ever knew was Frank Vizetelly, who is supposed to have lost his life at, or near, the place where the expedition of Hicks Pasha was eaten up. During the Carlist war we were standing one morning beside a clear, rushing stream at Estella in Navarre. The sun-arrows were flaming like the Archangel's sword through the arches of an old bridge, and striking the moving waters with such a vivid tremor, that one expected to hear a clash as of weapons upon a shield, and to see sparks of fire.

"That is beautiful," said Frank; "I could look at it for an hour. But you have no appreciation of the play of colour."

"Have I not, indeed! To me it is so beautiful that I could look at it not for an hour, but hours—ay, for a week."

"Lukewarm enthusiast," exclaimed Frank, assuming a heroic attitude. "I, who speak to you, I could look at it *for ever!* Let us to breakfast."

Poor truant Frank, he would not let himself be outdone by anybody. What a rich imagination was his, what a prodigal flow of spirits, what a prankish temper! Withal he sketched well, and had a great command of nervous English. The last letter I had from him was dated from *La Fonda de los Contrabandistas*, in the Pyrenees. His Carlist friends, he wrote, had fallen back on smuggling as the only means of showing contempt for the Madrid Government

open to patriots, and he was with them, loyal to his comrades of the lost cause. From Spain he drifted to Tunis, at the time of the French invasion; from Tunis to Egypt; from Egypt to the Soudan; thence to the unknown.*

Having delivered myself of my disquisition on art, I have now another heretical admission to make. I did not enter a single picture gallery at Munich, for that I was not in the tone and humour to study the eloquence that is voiceless. Looking over some half-erased pencillings in a frayed memorandum book, I am reminded that the head-gear of the Bavarian Infantry diverted me mightily. It is neither Prussian *pickel-haube*, Prince Albert flower-pot, busby, nor shako; but something *sui generis*—a black leather helmet, with high overarching and projecting comb of

* At latest advices, there is some hope that Mr. Vizetelly survives and charms the followers of the Mahdi with his sketches.

crumb-brush shape, with frizzly black nap on the crest. Imposing-looking, assuredly, as it adds to the stature of the wearer, but almost as much of a nuisance on a campaign as a Guardsman's bearskin. I can also decipher a note about Bavarian military music. It is spirit-stirring and unimprovable in its proper sphere; but in a beer-saloon concert—the original smoking concerts those, for the auditor can almost hang his hat upon the blinding reek—there is over-much trombone and bombardoon to be agreeable. The sensation may be compared to that of a bagpipes skirling in a back parlour. They are exceedingly cheap, those concerts; no connoisseur of noise can complain that he does not get value for his money.

Other drinks besides beer can be had in the Bavarian capital, but it is apparently necessary to recommend them. I copied this recommendation from the wine-card in my hotel:

As a means of refreshment,
When the faculties of life are exhausted;
To animate and cheer up,
When tristful days are to be overcome;
To regulate and adjust,
When disproportions in the nourishment
And disturbances in the organism have taken place;
And as a defense
Against transitory molestations,
Called forth by disorganic nature;
It is then, that

WINE

Will not be surpassed
By any produce of nature,
Or of art.

PROF. VON LIEBIG.

Munich lives well and fattens, but I have no desire to revisit that frigid monumental metropolis, with its obtrusive make-believe art-adoration and its engrafted Hellenistic culture, until the natives have some quicksilver injected into their veins.

CHAPTER V.

Wondrous London—Mr. A. P. Sinnett—A Hairdresser's Competition — Mormons at Prayer — An Indignant Dancing-Master—Supping with Burglars—Scotland Yard—The Black Museum—Superintendent Harris on Clues—A Morning with Calcraft—The Governor of Newgate makes a Joke—How they flog Garrotters—The Hangman's Idea of Propriety—A Meat Breakfast—The Writer is reproved by the *Saturday Review*.

For several months after my return from Bavaria, my duties confined me to London. That immense metropolis—truly a mother city, in its teeming richness, its dignified maturity, and its wide-spreading influence — grows upon the dweller therein. It is not one city, but many, and would require and repay a life's study to grasp it in its manifold aspects—the mart of trade by busy Cheapside, the maritime resort by the docks, the

headquarters of the nation's literature in and near the Fleet Street area, the secluded legal rendezvous of the Temple, the legislative and official centre in the shadow of St. Stephen's clock-tower, the haunt of clubdom and bazaar of beauty, rank, and fashion in the West End, and many distinct things besides in many sections. A city of startling contrasts, of luxury and squalor, of pampered ease and hard striving, of gain abounding, of wealth incalculable, of enterprise the boldest, and charity the most lavish — most seats of population are parochial by comparison. Withal, a city of chicanery and crime and suffering, and of awful loneliness for the stranger within its gates. Its size is oppressive; its ever-springing arms are continuously extending, like the tentacula of some monster of fable, and clutching what they can reach in all points of the compass. What they clutch they hold. A quarter of a century there were green fields, shady lanes, and ref

ing w[illegible]astes of commonage, I am told, where now are bl[illegible]ocks of houses, thoroughfares gas-lit, threaded by tr[illegible]am-cars and telegraph wires, and trim squares under[illegible] jealous lock and key. What will it not be a c[illegible]quarter of a century hence—provided a great fire, c[illegible]r a desolating plague, or an earthquake, does not c[illegible]me to curtail its proportions and overwhelm its p[illegible]de?

[illegible] is a city of wonders, the most tantalising wond[illegible]er of all its magnitude. But it is not Rome, nor y[illegible]et Paris; they are still unparalleled. And, furth[illegible]ermore, one can master them; in either I could[illegible] make myself at home. London is too large.

While awaiting a call to the Continent, I had much[illegible] leisure on hand, and was left pretty well to my [illegible]own devices. There was a sort of understan[illegible]ding that I should select such subjects as I t[illegible]ought suitable for headed articles in the *St[illegible]dard*. The *Evening Standard* was edited [illegible] by Mr. Charles Williams, a perfect glutton

for work, who thought nothing of toiling at his desk four-and-twenty hours at a stretch. As the leaderettes were all written by Mr. A. P. S innett, and the other matter was mostly a reproduction of what had appeared in the morning issue, there was no room for me. These leaderettes were admirably and most punctually put together, always had a polish, and sometimes had a point. But the task was overmuch for one man. They were patterned, I often thought, on the "Notes" of the original *Pall Mall Gazette,* the wittiest and pithiest productions of the class which had ever smartened a London paper. There were usually from four to five every day, or an average of about seven-and-twenty in a week. The great difficulty was to find fresh material to handle. When it is taken into account that one was limited to space and to time, that there was no opportunity for consulting books, and that the unforeseen was ever cropping up, it will be admitted th

demand was an undue tax on an individual brain, and that there was an excuse for occasionally "scamping," and an unavoidable tendency to run into unconscious repetitions of phrase, and that objectionable mould of English which I shall call newspaperese. Mr. Sinnett was never slipshod. He was a reliable piece of intellectual mechanism; but continuous labour like this tells. Just in time, the talented gentleman had the venue changed for him, and was invited to India to edit the *Allahabad Pioneer*. I saw him in his office there, smoking his cap on head, as in his little room on the top storey of the *Standard* premises (so as to be nearer the printers), pounding away as industriously as of yore under the hot sun of the tropics, and turning out the same polished, pointed article. One cannot draw perpetually upon the same side of the mental store with impunity; tissue will waste; leisure must be sought, or the change of some other pursuit. Some people

find their relaxation in gardening or ent
Mr. Gladstone finds it in cutting down t
Mr. Parnell in carpentering; Mr. Sinnet
his in esoteric Buddhism.

Among the themes I took up at that
"The Foreigner in London"—a series o
upon whom, by the way, was never c
being interrupted by "metal more a
supplied by the foreigner abroad. I
well as I can recollect, about the It
Hatton Garden, the Germans, and th
but had to leave the Dutch, the Scand
the Spaniards, the Asiatics, and the
touched. The notion, which is not b
the disposal of any journalist who w
adopt it.

In my professional casts around I wa
at some remarkable gatherings, and p
into some queer localities, both of which a
to be discovered by those who know

earch for them in this wondrous London,
ovided with the proper credentials. Boz
ns exhausted the mine.

remarkable gatherings I may mention
tion of French barbers, or rather tonsorial
t was very serious; the artists went to
n the heads of living subjects with a
solemnity, and built up such edifices
y the aid of pads, pins, combs, brushes,
e, and curling-tongs as made those who
mock stop to extol. Lord! what a
incomprehensible to the uninitiated is
toilette! The damsels operated upon
ed in a row on a platform. They walked
fallow state; they did not walk down—
o familiar; they descended with a stately,
gait, assisted by the *merlins*, and paraded
ıe room amid a buzz of critical comment,
metimes rose to applause. How meta-
d they were! Here was a powdered

beauty of Anne's reign, her locks bru
from her forehead until her eyes seemed
there a nymph of Greece with a classic
Faust's Marguerite, with her one lon
yellow tress on her back, paced behi
with a fragile tiara of ribbons, flowe
and sparkling sprays threatening to
her when she bowed to her admirers;
elaborate hoydenish wispiness, and pla
Quakerly coiffure, and—most fetchin
Lovelace's Amarantha in the flesh, wi

—clues of golden thread
Excellently ravelled.

Camille Barrère (then an occasional
the *Echo,* now spokesman of France
was with me, and we were both perm
awe and deference for the calling of I
Truefitt. In the adjudication of prizes
points for time and finish. One of

w that Le Brun's epigram came in
y:

Lambin, mon barbier et le vôtre,
Rase avec tant de gravité,
Que, tandis qu'il rase un côté
La barbe repousse de l'autre.

did not like it when he saw it in
s hopeless to think or try to please
e journalist who acts on the plan is
s Æsop's man with the ass. You can
s whose corns you tread upon when
A whimsical case in illustration occurred
ortly after this tournament of hair-
I ferreted out a Mormon place of
the north of London, attended one
ices, and described it. A dull dead-
nction it was, with monotonous hymns
prayers mumbled without ardour, and
homily from a clean-looking, white-
r, the only clean-looking person present.

The feeling that drew me there was one of curiosity. I was anxious to breed of humanity the Mormon femal assigned. If those I inspected were s the sect, she is no enchantress. Such of simpering, shabby, spinsters of a I have seldom met. The extravagan monism, I reflected, carry with then punishment. It would have been a he to have been mated to one of these to speak of ten or a dozen. I ente improving conversation with the elde cately asked him did the Latter- practise polygamy in England? He acute gaze upon me.

"We believe in the doctrine of but we do *not* practise it in England."

"Oh! And may I ask why not?"

"Because," answered the judiciou is forbidden by the laws of England."

s by the way. In my account of that happened to state that the conventicle on week nights as "a cheap dancing- was apparently the Almack's of the d clog-dancers of Merrie Islington." came an indignant letter to the editor upils of the academy, protesting against gatory tone" of the article, and in- t the insulting allusion charging those ted ball-room dancing with indulgence ny other form of hornpipe should be

I sincerely apologise to that pro- he poetry of motion; I conscientiously n that I was unaware the hornpipe form," and I am prepared to grant *lèves,* like the bear in *She Stoops to* never danced but to the genteelest of d then only danced the impeccable graceful galop, and the edifying waltz. night I attended an entertainment to

burglars in a court off Drury Lane. N admitted unless he was qualified by acquaintance with one of Her Majesty' Most of them carried the qualification cowed faces and the peculiar cut of t which, I believe, is called "the coun They got a supper and several sermor a cheerless lot theirs must be! It was tion to watch them eat. They fell food ravenously, and left the plates as if they had been licked by so many pa The man who organised the entertain ex-jail-bird, made their minds easy by tl that there were no "suspicious character ing plain-clothes officers, within the precin as he spoke to them in homely words, v by slang, he made a visible effect. them were asked to the platform; of t most were sneaks with that odious whine in their voices which convicts

; but a few stood up sturdily and
ed that they could not become honest—
y ever so hard—so great was the pre-
gainst those who had picked oakum.
re marked men, and the police were
lown upon them. One orator elicited
the admission that he had been flogged
The shivering wretches, with starvation,
on, and ill-health in their pinched fea-
l that unmistakable glare, half of fright,
challenge, of the animal at bay, I could
them. I was standing by the doorway
passed out one by one, and every man
them offered me his hand. Did I decline
fered shake? No, my Christian friend.
up as they were, I, too, might have
iven to the same courses. I put my-
ll *en évidence*—how could I tell where
come across them again and from what
ght save me—and grasped their hands

heartily. Some had very delicate fingers shocked the gallant knight of the road, Duval, would have been if he had se defile of the unhappy. For them "The Calendar" was the "Encyclopædia Britann steps to the gibbet were the golden stai they might climb some day. Roguery d thrive in the realm in this century, e usury or other astute form of fraud.

It was my fortune afterwards to b trinated into the manner in which these carry on their operations. I was detailed an essay on housebreaking, and naturall to Scotland Yard where the best informa that art is to be obtained. The practiti it must have a sense of humour; they their implements by names which have with the corporation, conveying an insi thereby that the members of the municip of kinship with them. There are sher

n and so on, all crowbars, well-made, short bend at the extremity; this gives powerful leverage in prizing open safes. with wedges of fine steel, a rope ladder over a portico, a dark lantern, an assort- wires and keys, chisels and files, and a light slippers, are the housebreaker's tock-in-trade. He seldom undertakes a unless he has been informed by his how the land lies—where the plate is d what are the habits of the household. scouts are generally unfaithful servants. rt, nearly all the successful robberies in ngdom are "put-up jobs." The house-, in nine cases out of ten, is an arrant and, if disturbed at his business, he decamps with lightning rapidity. When urglar enters a room, all he has to secure himself from notice or intrusion tuff the keyhole and place a small quoin the door. Should anybody try to push

in, the door opposes resistance, the conclusion is formed that the lock is wrong, and, while the means to pick or force it are being sought for, the burglar has ample time to make off by the unlatched window. These gentry are provided with bags to carry off the booty, and usually have the list slippers tied together by a long string for convenience in hanging over the arm. They seldom show fight, unless when absolutely driven into a corner. At Scotland Yard there is a telegraph bureau, with a staff of police clerks constantly on duty transcribing and receiving messages from outlying stations, a spacious and well-wardrobed disguising-room, in which the detectives can transform themselves at will into graziers, sailors, peddlers, and what not, and a most interesting collection known as the Prisoners' Lost Property Office. Here are stored the goods and chattels seized on felons pending identification by the owners or release of the felons on ticket-of-leave.

Superintendent Harris, an active and intelligent officer in more than the stereotyped sense of the words, conducted me over this, and expatiated almost fondly on a set of burglars' implements, of whose workmanship Sheffield might be proud.

"Will you believe it," he said, "the ruffian to whom those belonged had the cool impudence to come here on his return from Portland and claim them, as he was about to start in business afresh!"

In a room upstairs there is a hideous and heterogeneous assortment of the appliances of thieving, knavery, and murder—hatchets, flint-lock pistols, the spikes with blades that flew out, with which the pirates of the Flowery Land had done their deeds of darkness, carving-knives with blood-stains upon them, the ropes which suicides had misused to strangle themselves, coiners' apparatus, masks, phials of poison, bottles with scraps of shrivelled flesh preserved in spirits of wine, flattened bullets, loaded dice, a roulette-

table, with a catch beneath to stop the running marble at will, and a repulsive figure of a negro with feathered head-dress, taken from an obscene booth on Epsom Downs. Beside this "Black Museum," as it is termed, the "Chamber of Horrors" is almost pleasant. There is a charnel smell in the place, and the visitor shrinks as if he were in contact with things slimy and loathsome. He would be a strong-minded man who would sleep there and have no nightmare. I felt as if a pressure were lifted off my breast as I came out of it. Mr. Harris originated this treasury of crime, and by his care the specimens, each of which has its fell legend, were neatly labelled and set in order. It is one of the most extraordinary sights in town, but it is not everybody who is admitted to it. The last time I went there it was in company with Frank Power,* since

* Power was massacred with Colonel Stewart while this volume was at press. I may have more to say of him in another.

celebrated as the Vice-Consul in beleaguered Khartoum, and on writing my name in the visitors' book I perceived that the preceding autographs were those of W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. They could not get much material for joyous opera there. There is almost a library of photographic albums of malefactors, all taken with their hands laid flat on their breasts. Whether it was the effect of prepossession or not I cannot say, but there did not appear to me to be a solitary good face amongst them. All were sulky, vicious, semi-idiotic, with vizor of wolf or weasel, with low foreheads, contracted brows, eyes greedy or glassy, villanous jowls, and the tokens of mean or brutish animality. This must, in instances, have been a trick of the prison camera, for I encountered some of these people afterwards in the streets out of the livery of guilt, and they looked fairly respectable members of the community. On leaving, Mr. Harris placed a massive gold hunting-watch in my hands,

and asked me could I notice any peculiarity in it which might be of aid as clue to the habits of the owner. It was beyond me.

"Well," he said, "the man who carried it must either have been very nervous or have kept irregular hours. If you will observe it is badly scratched on the back-plate inside from his unsteadiness in winding it up."

"The moral of which is," I observed, "that lawbreakers should patronise keyless watches."

The Superintendent looked disgusted. Mr. Harris is no longer curator of that museum, but it is still preserved with watchfulness and affection. Some pretty additions have been made to it recently —amongst others the patent pilferer's garter, strung round with hooks. This arrangement is fastened above the knee, and is much affected by fashionably-dressed ladies who buy boots. When they are surrounded with a number from which to choose, it is not their fault if some get hitched on by the loops to the garter-hooks. No

one would for a moment be so rude as to think of looking for missing property under a customer's skirts.

As I am dealing with criminals and their environments, I may be pardoned for introducing some reminiscences of a morning visit to the late Mr. Calcraft.

I was requested to attend a flogging of garroters in Newgate, and to write a pre-Raphaelite narrative of the rite. The parting injunction I received was to lay in a good breakfast before I started, as the sight was not likely to be an agreeable one—an advice which struck me as very much, in its logic, like the hint to an intending visitor to France, to eat a hearty meal at the "Lord Warden" before trusting himself to the tossing steamer for Calais.

As simple fact, I overslept myself next morning, and had barely time to reach St. Sepulchre's in an overpaid hansom as the clock marked five minutes

to eight, my stomach being empty, and my spirits low.

The presiding sheriff of the day had been prodigal of orders for admission to the morbid crew who sought the favour; but the governor of the jail did not relish that the ugly business should be made a raree-show of, and stood behind the wicket to challenge the qualifications of those who knocked for entrance. Bald-headed Mr. Jonas was not a humourist; wherefore I looked upon myself as privileged in having heard the only joke that grim gentleman was ever credited with.

"Are you a representative of the Press?" he asked of a bluff acquaintance, who stood by me outside the portal.

"Yes, certainly," was the answer.

"What paper do you belong to?"

"The *Sportsman*."

A smile flickered round the Governor's bloodless lips as he said with a chuckle:

"Can't let you in; this isn't a sporting event."

Before passing beyond the vestibule, I took the precaution to read the offence for which the delinquents were to be punished. Their crime was one of dastardly brutality, and I made up my mind that they merited no sympathy. The account of their bad and base conduct towards a defenceless old woman did more to steel my nerves than any amount of muffins and Bohea with ham and eggs freshly-laid thrown in.

"Have you seen the cast of Müller's head—no—nor Jack Sheppard's leg-bolt—not yet—nor the frame of the gibbet? Well, we have hardly a minute to spare now," said the kindly sheriff with his mop of curly white hair, leaning his hand upon my shoulder, and pushing me in front of the procession which took its way through the hollow-sounding corridors and across one of the narrow yards, with its high gray walls pierced

with high grated windows. He meant to pay me a compliment—amiable functionary that he was—and I blessed him mentally in the reverse fashion.

I will be frank, I did not like the job, and here I was put into the front rank among the spectators. I reflected that I would have to go through with it, in any case; so falling back upon the reckless philosophy "in for a penny, in for a pound," I determined to put on a bold face.

We entered a long, low room, ignorant of furniture, except a sort of press, waist-high against one wall, and a long deal table by the other. What I liken unto the press was the whipping apparatus, with stocks for the prisoner's feet and holdfasts for his hands. He stepped into this apparatus and his feet were forthwith imprisoned. Extending his arms, he placed them in the crescent hollow of a plank before him,

another plank was let down, and his wrists were pinioned in rings. These rings were lined with india-rubber, to prevent his hurting himself in the constriction of his agony. Thus we pickle rods to burn the back, and supply elastic bands to avert undue chafing of the wrists. Thus we make experiments to increase the initial velocity and penetrating power of ordnance, and we improve our liniment and send out our Red Cross nurses at one and the same time. I walked behind the table and stood beside an elderly man. A short-handled whip, not unlike a hunting-crop, with nine lashes of closely-plaited thongs, and nine knots on each, lay on it; I took it up.

"Is this the cat-o'-nine-tails of which we hear so much?" I asked.

"That's it," said the elderly man in a choky voice.

"It does not seem to me so formidable a weapon as I expected."

"Heh! It tickles 'em all the same, as you'll see."

The first prisoner was brought in—a sullen, lumpish, thick-skinned brute, with an evil forehead. His shirt was pulled over his head, and he was fastened into the whipping apparatus. The elderly man deliberately took off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, lifted the cat, and stepped over to a position behind the prisoner's naked back.

The elderly man was the late Mr. Calcraft. Mr. Jonas, Dr. Gibson, and the sheriff stood in positions behind the hangman. Mr. Jonas gave the words, "one," "two," "three," for the hangman to strike; Dr. Gibson watched that nature should not be subjected to too severe a strain; the sheriff blithely superintended the performance. I am not going to give a pre-Raphaelite report of the flogging here. The ruffian bore it well. He closed his teeth at first,

but he had to groan and draw deep respirations eventually, and to evade the descending blow he curved in his back like a patient in an epileptic spasm.

"There ain't no use a-doin' o' that. You'll only ketch it worse," said the late Mr. Calcraft.

"Silence, and proceed with the sentence," gruffly exclaimed Mr. Jonas.

At a flogging match, as at an affair of honour, it appears, no talking is permitted on the ground.

Soon, there was a bend sinister on the spread of skin. By gradation it was furrowed with ridges fiery scarlet, then leaden blue, then of a verdigris tint, inclining in oozy pimples here and there to an angry purple, but no blood was drawn in spirts, and no jagged shreds of flesh were sent spinning to the roof. Who said that lied. The legal butcher did his work adroitly. He did not stun the criminal by consecutive heavy lashes on one spot, but plied the scourge

airily, as a flyfisher would his line, distributing its favours discriminatingly over the whole expanse of hide.

There were other low miscreants flagellated (one who was stripped had a poor man's plaster on his chest and began to yell before he got a single blow), and then we came into the cold air of the morning and I had leisure to look at Mr. Calcraft—a low-sized man with a shuffling gait, a sallow complexion, a sordid expression, a face with no more emotion in it than a wall, a stumpy nose under dead fish-like eyes, and over a broken colonnade of yellow teeth—a man with the decrepitude of age, but none of its sweet, benevolent characteristics.

"Do you recollect a friend of mine you had an interview with one Monday morning?" asked the pleasant sheriff. "He was in my employment and a decidedly good workman, Tom O'Styles?"

"He a friend o' yourn, sir," said the indignant hangman. "I don't believe it. Why, he was no good—he was a wilful murderer."

And the auditors in that jail-yard laughed.

"Gentlemen, I presume you're peckish," said the cheery sheriff. "I've ordered them to prepare breakfast in one of the rooms over the Central Criminal Court, and I shall be most happy if you will all join me."

Before we left, the late Mr. Calcraft eagerly and somewhat querulously clutched at the sheriff, complaining that it was customary for those who attended his performance for the first time to give him a "tip."

The sheriff gave him a crown-piece. Nobody else followed the sheriff's example.

When we got to the breakfast-room the first refreshment I swallowed was a glass of strong brandy neat, and I fancy even Sir Wilfrid Lawson would not have grudged it to me under

the circumstances. The room in which this repast was partaken of was that where those charming little *déjeûners à la fourchette* were held by the officials while criminals were swinging by the neck until they were dead from the adjoining scaffold.

I gave the demanded pre-Raphaelite narrative of the flogging, so did Mr. Greenwood, the "amateur casual" and man-and-dog matcher in the *Daily Telegraph*. In the columns of the *Saturday Review* we were both honoured with a very severe castigation for the ghastly literal minuteness with which we had gloated over every detail of the bestial festival. I suppose we had the bad taste to try and make the readers' flesh creep. I have seen many floggings, but intend to see no more. They demoralise the spectator. If asked my deliberate opinion as to their efficacy, I would unhesitatingly say there is no better remedy for brutality, and the punishment should

be extended to wife-beaters and animal-torturers. But in no case should a soldier be flogged. When he commits any crime deserving of that humiliation, he should be drummed out of his corps or shot. Yet good officers assert that discipline cannot be maintained on active service without the lash.

CHAPTER VI.

Among the Pugilists—"The Benicia Boy"—A Disinterested Doctor—Sayers as Public Speaker—An Awful Cheat—Peculiarities of the Modern Gladiator—A Champion afraid of Ghosts—Tricks of the P.R.—The Circus Men—The Greatest Person in Ireland—Wild-Beast Tamers—Educational Standard of the Acrobat.

Professor Mortimer had impressed upon me, when leaving Paris, to visit the fighting-houses in London, if I desired to study odd phases of character. I had a bent that way myself, for, being a small man, I have a great respect for brute strength and physical prowess and their exponents. John Carmel Heenan, "the Benicia Boy," traced his ancestors from a village not many miles from where I was born, and very proud of the honour the village was. I had been fed up from my

youth with stories of Donnelly and Cooper. There was a vague tradition (which I secretly cherished) that one of my mother's family had been an eminent pugilist. I rigged up a sack of sand in an unused stable once, and regularly practised left-hand delivery on its vile carcase. I sometimes played truant from home to attend a cock-fight. Altogether, I suppose I must plead guilty to the charge of having been a boy with wicked propensities. And they grew with my growth. When a circus, of which Heenan was one of the attractions, came round to my native town during a college vacation, I called upon the champion at his hotel, and sent up my card. It is a dreadful avowal to make, but truth must out, I was more delighted at being received by the prizefighter than if he were a prince of the blood. What a magnificently-proportioned man he was—the model of a taller and more sinewy elder brother of Apollo. He was gracious in manners (when he liked),

had a refined cast of countenance, and was civil to me to a degree. He was reclining on a sofa when I entered the room, and apologised for not rising, as he was suffering from a contused foot. I asked to see the injured member, and plainly told him he must refrain from exerting it if he would get better.

"But what can I do?" he said. "I have to put on the gloves once, and sometimes twice a day."

"Show yourself to the public, and tell them you will spar if they insist upon it, but it costs you intense pain. You'll find they will not ask you to; they only want to see you."

The colossus reflected, and said he would risk taking my advice. He allowed me to examine his muscles, which were phenomenally hypertrophied; the gluteus maximus and the deltoid were simply grand; but for a human animal of his development the wrist was noticeably small.

At parting I promised to send him a surgeon whom I could recommend.

That evening, at the performance, he limped in by the aid of a stick, spoke the speech I had counselled, and was received with tremendous applause. As he was retiring he caught sight of me by the ring-door, hobbled over, and shook hands.

"Your friend, the doctor," he said, "is a bright man and a gentleman. He would take no fee from me, and recommended me, as you did, to keep quiet."

For several days I felt as if a couple of inches were added to my stature, and swaggered about the town, an object of envy to my companions. I bring in this anecdote, as "The Benicia Boy" was a remarkable personage, and I know most people have a latent curiosity to learn what they can about athletes in private life. Subsequently, I came to know Tom Sayers

and his big dog. The English champion was a different build and manner of man; had a gnarly pug face, tough as hickory; looked what he was, a thorough fighter, and was sturdily set up on a pair of legs like pillars. Tom had no pretence to education, but kept a betting-book all the same, the timekeeper of the busses at the stand, hard by "The Britannia" at Camden Town, assisting him in his arithmetical calculations. At a dinner at which both of the famous gladiators were present, Heenan acknowledged the toast of their healths in a neat oration; and Tom, being called upon to respond in his turn, gave an unconscious imitation of that Mr. Cruger who said ditto to Mr. Burke:

"All I've got to say, gem'men," he muttered, "is as 'ow my friend, Mr. Heenan, 'as said all as I'd 'ave said myself, if I'd a spoke."

In Brighton, his birthplace, it is considered the correct thing to claim relationship with the

illustrious bricklayer. In the course of one evening, I met sixteen individuals there who boasted that they were distant cousins of his, and expected to have homage rendered them therefor in the shape of drinks. Though Tom had no book-learning himself, like most of his calling, he had a reverence for those who had. One of his pleasures was to have the description of the battle at Farnborough, which appeared in the *Times*, read aloud to him as he smoked. That stirring piece of writing was the work of Mr. Nicholas A. Woods, and so highly did the champion appreciate it, that he sought out the writer and offered to give him gratuitous lessons in boxing—quite a novelty for Tom—in token of gratitude.

When that Heenan and Sayers fight came off, there was an unprecedented sale of the sporting papers among clergymen. It would be far-fetched and unkind to suppose that they

bought them for other purpose than to read the cricketing reports. When a pink sheet peeps from the back-pocket of a young curate, it is the *Globe*, never the *Sporting Times*.

The fighting-houses, or "drums" as they are called at the West End, were mostly in the vicinity of Long Acre. One of the best-known of these was "The Mitre," kept by Nat Langham, who had beaten Sayers. Mortimer had been a special favourite at the establishment, and "Ould Nat" used to take an immense delight in hearing him converse in different languages with foreign visitors to the parlour. To him the parrot faculty represented the height of genius. The large room upstairs where the fancy congregated and pommelled each other was presided over by Job Cobley, who rejoiced in the appellation of "The Enthusiastic Potboy." The pugilist proper was a decent manly fellow, in most instances; but the satellites who gathered

round him were usually a pack of lazy, brutal foul curs, the scum of the earth, given to beer, blasphemy, and "ear-biting," that is, drawing any respectable man they saw into a corner and making a whispered petition for a small loan never to be repaid. The modern gymnasium, with such teachers as Bat Mullins and Professor Donnelly, is a great improvement on the old "drum." Sparring is a noble exercise for the healthy and robust stripling, promotes readiness, self-control, and fortitude, and supplies a convincing argument in a gutter discussion. I remember once having witnessed a very pretty illustration of the advantage of possessing a knowledge of the manly art of self-defence. A gentleman was quietly taking a glass of bitter ale in a tavern; a huge, boisterous, half-tipsy rough snatched the glass and drained its contents.

"That was my liquor," remarked the gentleman.

"It's mine now," said the rough.

"Give me another, miss," said the gentleman to the barmaid.

When it was filled, the rough again seized the glass and tossed it off.

"You'll have to pay for that," said the well-dressed man with provoking calmness.

"And if I don't choose?"

"Ah! then you will compel me to make you," and the gentleman removed from his finger a ring.

The rough laughed in his face and stepped towards the door. The gentleman barred the way and landed him a swift left-hander straight from the shoulder. Three rounds were fought in regular form, and when the bully lay on the floor after his third knock-down, he looked up at his antagonist and said in a tone of comical ruefulness: "I've enough for this journey, guv'nor, I'll pay for the beer."

"Under the circumstances, I won't ask you," said the gentleman.

The rough, almost sobered by this time, rose, wiped his blood-stained nose, and, gazing at his late antagonist, reproachfully shook his head and said: "A cove wot's dressed like you ain't got no bisniss to be so handy with the mauleys. You're an awful cheat, *you* are;" and he departed amid a roar of laughter. It will be thought strange that nobody connected with the tavern interfered, but the truth is they suspected what was coming, and knew what the rough did not, that Mr. A—— was one of the best men of a celebrated West End amateur boxing club, plucky as a bull, and hard as horse-nails. It is a gift not to be despised to be able to capsize a rowdy cadger at a theatre door; once sent to earth, he will rarely have the temerity to come to the attack again. When the use of nature's weapons was encouraged in this realm, we heard less of

the treacherous knife and the Lancashire "purr." If I had a son, I should most certainly have him taught to box before he muddled his brains in the attempt to construe "Cornelius Nepos." There is still a widespread suppressed love for the art. More than one newspaper in London owes its prosperity to graphic accounts of the great fights of yore, which are literally devoured by thousands weekly. The most popular series of these pen-and-ink chronicles of fisticuffs were written first by a medical man, were continued by a rising member of Parliament, and at present are furnished by an eloquent doctor of laws, all good friends of mine. They afford manlier and more wholesome reading than the proceedings of the Divorce Court.

Some of the prize-fighting fraternity cultivate tastes the outside world would never give them credit for. Jem Ward painted cleverly, and Tom King rears beautiful flowers, but when they retire

from the arena, as a rule, they go into "the public line," start a tavern with the help of some brewer in the background. A few take to the betting-ring, and others attach themselves to travelling circuses. There have even been examples of pugilists turning preachers, but they were not actuated by the sincerest of motives—were not pugilists with respectability and self-respect. In my divagations in "the drums" I was safe from insult or annoyance; a mighty fighter had taken me under his wing, and watched over me with an almost oppressive patronage. I had won his regard by praising a letter from his daughter, who was at a boarding-school. After that he showed me all her letters, and we had many a long chat on education, the style of her handwriting, her progress at the piano, and what she should do in life. I picked the little gold watch, with enamelled ornaments, he sent her as a present. Poor lass! she nearly broke her

father's heart; she died of consumption. Tom was a man of herculean thews and sinews, and feared nothing living; but I must say I never saw a more abject specimen of cowardice than he presented one night. I told him some choice ghost-stories in a large re-echoing house in the country, tenanted by none but ourselves. Some of these men, with their hardy frames and great animal natures, have touches of weakness and superstition. They would join in a professional fraud—a "barney"—without compunction, yet they would turn pale if they accidentally walked under a ladder. I remember having travelled to Ireland with Joe Coburn's party, when that American champion had arranged to meet Jem Mace—an arrangement which never went beyond words. Jack McDonnell, Heenan's trainer, accompanied Coburn in the same capacity. Jack was a devout Catholic, and Friday is a day of abstinence from flesh meat with the members of that Church. I

met him in front of the inn which was Coburn's headquarters, in a street off Eden Quay, Dublin.

"Well, Jack, how is our man getting on?"

"Getting on," said Jack bitterly, "he couldn't be getting on worse. How can he expect any luck or grace in this world or the next? He has just swallowed the full o' my hat o' rump-steak, and it a Friday and all. Walk up and you'll find him playin' cards with Joe Goss. I'm done with him."

Artfulness enters almost as largely as strength or skill or luck into the decision of the trials of endurance with the gloves, which have succeeded the old-fashioned combats with the naked fists. The outcry made about these gloves is absurd. One would think they were stiff as knightly gauntlets or something like the classic cestus, to read the frantic articles from the pens of men who ought to have known better. Of course, punishment can be inflicted by those who don them, and a glove contest under the Queensberry conditions

can be a genuine and most exacting test of stamina; but the palpable disfigurement is less obtrusive than in the fights with the "bunch of fives." I have been present at a duel with the mittens by gaslight in the East End, and the man in my corner was beaten to a standstill. He was full of game, but could not come up to the scratch, when his father, who was assisting him, accidentally kicked over a bucket of iced-water and immediately rushed on the stage, and with a well-simulated indignation demanded who had done the dirty trick which gave away his boy's chances. While the moisture was being mopped up with towels and saw-dust, his son was enabled to recover his wind, and stepped into the arena at the call of time. The fight, which was virtually lost, ended in a draw. I looked at the old man with a twinkle in the corner of an eye, and he enlarged one cheek with his tongue, and we both smiled like the

ancient augurs. At a similar encounter in a hall near Oxford Street the gas was turned off, and there was a stampede to the door. In the confusion, the editor of a sporting paper, an ardent supporter of the manly science, was eased of a valuable breast-pin. When it was discovered to whom it belonged, the article was mysteriously recovered, and returned to him with apologies.

From the ring where the modern gladiators meet to that where horsemanship is displayed, is a natural transition. At Barnard's in the Westminster Bridge Road, opposite the hippodrome which is the goal of saw-dust ambition, now the property of Mr. Town Councillor Sanger, but familiar to former generations as Astley's, I made the acquaintance of sundry equestrians, acrobats, clowns, posture-masters, sword-swallowers, and wild-beast tamers, in short of Horace's

> Ambubaiarum collegia, pharmacopolæ,
> Mendici, mimæ, balatrones.

Cheery compotators all when they "had a shop" (the technical phrase for being in employment), masters of a picturesque slang, and given to lavish outlay on personal jewellery. The late Lieutenant Twigg of the 19th Foot, ring-master at Sanger's, was a fast friend of mine, and made me free of the society. He had previously been in a cavalry regiment, and told me many droll stories, one of which I must repeat. His corps lay at the Royal Barracks in Dublin, at the date of O'Connell's release from Richmond Penitentiary, when Dan was in the zenith of his popularity. The troops were confined to quarters, and the Lord Lieutenant visited them to await what might arise. Mr. Twigg conducted His Excellency over the regimental school-rooms to while away time, and expatiated on his theories of instruction, emphasising the excellent idea that it was a mistake to teach children lessons by rote—the proper system was to cultivate their reasoning

powers, and make sure that they understood what their answers conveyed.

"Now, here's a most intelligent pupil, Bill Jones. Tell me, Bill, who is the greatest person in these realms?"

"Her Majesty the Queen."

"Good. And who is the greatest person in Ireland, William?"

"Daniel O'Connell!" said the boy Jones, without hesitation.

"'Pon my word, Mr. Twigg, I am afraid the lad is right," said the Viceroy, with a sickly smile at the discomfited theorist, who blushed like a poppy to the tips of his ears.

There was one man at Barnard's whose mode of shaking hands irritated me. He had a habit of extending two fingers. I said to him one night, rather sharply, "Why don't you give me your whole hand, frankly? All or none: that's my motto."

A bystander touched my elbow, but it was

too late. The murder was out. The poor fellow had only two fingers; the rest, with the thumb as a supplement, had been bitten off by a tiger. Black men are rather ready to enter cages as wild-beast tamers, which reveals more enterprise than prudence on their part. The denizens of the jungle have a stronger prejudice against them than their white brethren. When they are appointed lion kings, they invariably break out into a morbid affection for tall hats, gaudy neckties and strong perfumes.

"Hem!" said a foiled applicant for a situation of the kind to me once, "take note of that coloured gentleman, he's a swell, he is. He'll be eaten without salt before he's a year older. Why do these foreigners interfere with our perquisites?"

He was right. The unfortunate negro was made a meal of by the animals within the assigned period.

The performers who are so expert on the tight-

rope, and who swallow swords as contentedly as if they were taking steel that way for the benefit of their constitutions, are not always fitted to preside at a spelling-bee; nor are the Samsons who play with half-hundredweights strong in the concordances of syntax.

A distinguished artist, appareled regardless of expense, once requested me to oblige him by taking a look at a poster of the entertainment.

"Isn't that a shame?" he protested; "there's Bobo's name in such monster letters" (Bobo was his rival), "and mine so small. It's in my contract that I should get a big line on the bill."

"What do you mean?" I said, as I stared at him; "it is your name in the monster letters."

His countenance cleared, and he burst into a laugh.

"Right," he remarked, "quite right; of course it is. But—but—the fact is, they pretended you

could not read, and I laid a bet you could; and —and—I've been and won it!"

The educational defects of the class are easily accounted for, and are excusable. Their parents have to lead a peripatetic existence, and the children are compelled to make themselves useful almost as soon as they can toddle. They tumble before they teeth. If they are to acquire any reputation as acrobats or equestrians, they must begin young, when the limbs are pliable. But they are improving since the School Board laws came into action, and the trapeze performer of the next generation is not likely to fall into the error of supposing that Q.C. after a name means Curious Character. They do not all think so lightly of learning as that trick-rider who remarked to me:

"Education, indeed! What's the pull of education? There's a schoolfellow of mine as got a stunnin' education, an' he's earning a

beggarly sixty pounds a year as a lawyer's clerk, and here am I, that always was dunce in the corner, drawing my twelve guineas a week!"

The last time I saw this philosopher he was out at elbows, and no more brilliantly attired than a legal quill-driver. In a foolish moment he must have been so ill-advised as to turn back on his old principles and try to make a scholar of himself. These harrowing inroads of enlightenment are shaking even our circus-tents to their very foundations.

CHAPTER VII.

Concerning Jumbo's Family—An Ill-treated Zoologist—The Giant Pachyderm a Gigantic Fraud—Intelligence of the Monkey—Dodging Eight Elephants—Jamrach and Frank Buckland—Impressions of Idiots—Advice to Poor Gentlemen—A Self-Elected Parliament—The Man who painted George Washington—The Amateur Bashi-Bazouk—A Delicious Irish Rhetorician—Checkmated by a Negro—John Knox in the Balance—The "Unholy Ghost"—Edmond O'Donovan on the Stump—Judgment on Cogers' Hall—A Slight Anachronism.

THE wild-beast taming business had a great attraction for me. I have stopped hours alone in a menagerie—at the right side of the bars—taking note of the habits of the animals. I once put my hand into the mouth of a hyena, but it was a wretched scraggy hyena, no more vicious than a domestic cat, and looked as frightened

as I felt. But the elephant has always had a fierce fascination for me, and I have attempted to practise a little amateur tuition upon him. I have put him through his paces in the Agricultural Hall to oblige a friend; I have submitted to enthronement in a howdah in a Lord Mayor's Show, the better to get a view of the multitude in the street—(my mount, Jenny, died of a cold she caught on the occasion) — and I have ridden him across a "tight-rope" for a bet on the stage of Sanger's Hippodrome. But he is a dangerous customer, and I would not advise amateurs to trust too much to his docility. That, like his brightness, is considerably overrated. He is so bulky that he can crush you flat as a pancake against a wall, and yet wag that tiny pig eye of his as if it were the most exquisite of jokes. The question to what point the elephant's sagacity reaches is interesting. His affection for man is mostly of the cupboard love kind;

he has much less approach to the soul faculties than the horse or the dog; his strongest passions, apart from those of his periodical nature-fits, are jealousy and resentment. He may be taken as the most massive refutation now extant of the scientific heresy, which would trace the descent of the "piece of work" Hamlet describes from the soulless brute creation. His memory is good, certainly, but it is a memory uninspired by higher intelligence. He repeats his lessons like a dull schoolboy, but he is bothered if you set them to him out of the customary rotation. He is as stupid as that zoological lecturer whom I heard at Margate enlarging on the peculiarities of the ostrich of Africa, upon whose uncanny form the visitors were supposed then to be gazing.

"But, my friend," I remarked to him in an under voice, "that is not the ostrich of Africa, but the pelican of Australia."

"They're always a-playing jokes upon me,"

he said plaintively, "how can a cove tell which is which if they goes on a changin' the cages when his back is turned?"

He had got his discourse by heart, and reeled it off conscientiously, but as to the structure of the specimens he was lecturing upon he knew no more—perhaps less—than the spectators. Well, I suppose it would be absurd to expect a Linnæus at his salary; but with the traditions of the Ciceronian cicerones, and how they prepared for their labours present to my mind, I was pained.

With that elephant at the Agricultural Hall an instance occurred in proof of the argument I am advancing, namely, that the giant pachyderm is not such a prodigy of brains as we would gather from the pages of Goldsmith's "Natural History," or the delectable conversations in "Sandford and Merton." In the illness of the regular cornac, a substitute had to take

his place. He was furnished with a piece of paper setting forth what the animal could do.

"Behemoth will now walk round the ring on three legs."

Behemoth did as he was ordered, and the audience applauded.

"Behemoth will now stand on his hind legs and beg like a poodle."

"Behemoth will now walk over the prostrate body of my coloured servant," and so on, the elephant acquitting himself faithfully of his task. At length the cornac, throwing his whip on the tan, said, "Behemoth will now lift my whip with his trunk;" but Behemoth did nothing of the kind. Instead, he began moving round the ring backwards. The negro lad whispered to the non-plussed showman, "He no do that till the end, massa, that's his next number." A true showman is always equal to the emergency, and this one apologised by saying:

"Ladies and gentlemen, my favourite is not backing out of his engagement, but he is more polite than I am, and wishes to make his farewell before we go. So polished are his manners, that he retires as he was taught at Court, and presently will follow with the whip."

If the pachyderm understood what he was asked to do, it would not matter in what order the command was given; but all he knew—and *that* he was intent upon—was that he had to go through a certain drill. A monkey has more capacity of comprehension; but even a monkey is not a man. If you dip a roll of bread into a vessel of wine and eat the moistened end, the chances are the monkey will dip a roll in imitation, and nibble at the dry end: that is just where he falls short of the human being.

A young friend asked me once to show him some elephants in undress, and I took him along with me, having first borrowed an apron and

filled it with oranges. This he was to carry whilst accompanying me in the stable, but the moment we reached the door the herd set up such a trumpeting—they had scented the fruit—that he dropped the apron and its contents and scuttled off like a scared rabbit. There were eight elephants, and when I picked up the oranges I found I had five-and-twenty. I walked deliberately along the line giving one to each; when I got to the extremity of the narrow stable, I turned and was about to begin the distribution again, when I suddenly reflected that if elephant No. 7 in the row saw me give two oranges in succession to No. 8, he might imagine he was being cheated, and give me a smack with his proboscis—that is where the elephant falls short of the human being—so I went to the door and began *de novo* as before. Thrice I went along the line, and then I was in a fix. I had one orange left, and I had to get back to the door. Every

elephant in the herd had his greedy gaze focussed on that orange. It was as much as my life was worth to give it to any one of them. What was I to do? I held it up conspicuously, coolly peeled it, and sucked it myself. It was most amusing to notice the way those elephants nudged each other and shook their ponderous sides. They thoroughly entered into the humour of the thing.

I might be tempted to apologise for having dwelt upon such an apparently little subject as the elephant, but that I have a lively recollection of the enthralling and really edifying interest the entire British nation took in the exile of a dear darling member of the family a few years ago. That charming display of public sympathy did credit to the head and heart of the community. There is a future before the pachyderm. Somebody may yet make him a figure of parliamentary speech, like the badger, the jackal, and the "un-

kenneled" fox; but I fear he never will be popular as a household pet.

Jamrach in the East End is one of the largest importers of *ferœ naturæ*. I was dining with him and the late Frank Buckland on the terrace of the North Woolwich Gardens one summer evening that a monkey show was being held on the premises—which show, by-the-way, was chronicled by a reporter as a "marsupial" exhibition. I shall never forget the puzzlement depicted on the face of an old gentleman at the next table as the scraps of dialogue between the two enthusiastic naturalists floated across to him. They were talking shop. Buckland was never more happy than when modelling a sturgeon, dry-nursing a young hippopotamus, or talking shop.

"Tell me, Jam," he said, "how is it giraffes have come down so much in price?"

"Well, you see, Mr. B., this is how it is:

supply and demand. The market is glutted with them. They don't rate nothing to what they used to in Hamburg. By-the-by, I've just a consignment of tip-top kangaroos, if you care to come down to have a look at them."

"Why not? That I will, the first spare day I have. Any wombats lately?"

"Not what you want. Can't get a blessed platyrhine nohow."

"That's a pity," sighed Buckland. "Ah! while I think of it, save me the next healthy cobra di capello you lay hold of."

"Waiter," whispered the old gentleman, as he was paying for his meal, "were these parties on an outing from a private lunatic asylum?"

Touching asylums, I was asked to go to Earlswood, to give my impressions of the idiots. It was their annual *fête*, and amongst the entertainments provided was one by a mountebank who tossed knives! Considering how imitative idiots

are, this was a most injudicious item in the bill of fare. The programme of the proceedings was brought out on the premises, and I naturally went over the printing office. I remarked to the foreman compositor, an inmate, that a word was misspelled.

"I know it," he said; "but that is not my fault. I followed copy, and that is the first duty of a compositor. If the letters were all turned upside down I would set them up that way."

And this poor fellow was an idiot! Another exhibited some copies after Landseer, which were so cunningly done that the great master himself was confounded at their fidelity; and a third had made an immense model of the *Great Eastern*, perfect in hull and rig from truck to keelson. They seemed happy and well cared for. All, I noticed, had irregular teeth and an incontinence of the under lip. The mouth must be as sure

a test of the imbecile as the forehead. All, too, had quite a worldly hankering after stray coppers. One finely-built young man was pointed out to me who had enlisted in a cavalry regiment, and was positively three weeks at drill before his father discovered and reclaimed him. His weakness was to spend his pocket-money on what he considered conchological prizes. He would give a five-pound note for a nicely-marked cockle-shell. And yet there are people at large who throw away fortunes on blue china!

Thus amid a variety of most diverse calls—now attending the presentation of a donkey to Lord Shaftesbury by the costermongers, anon a midnight meeting of *bona-robas* in a Regent Street coffee-house, to-day at a great race-meeting, to-night at a masquerade of the insane at Colney Hatch—the time passed pleasantly enough. I had most enviable opportunities of storing materials for a whole series of realistic novels;

and now, to my grief and confusion, I have to confess I neglected them.

The study of the eccentricities of low life has its drawbacks. In London, unfortunately, it is not as in France or in Ireland, you cannot mix with social inferiors without incurring the certain risk of being offended. When you are courteous to them, they mistake your politeness for something else, and try to bring you to their own level. You can be civil to an Irishman, or a Frenchman, of the humbler classes, without the danger of his taking liberties on the strength of your good-nature. How often, when I have been addressed familiarly by some under-bred fellow to whom I have been affable, have I repeated to myself the lines of Cowper:

> The man who hails you Tom or Jack,
> And proves by thumping on your back,
> His sense of your great merit,
> Is such a friend, that one had need
> Be very much his friend indeed
> To pardon, or to bear it.

Certes, dukes consider it a privilege to be seen talking confidentially to a trainer's head-lad; but dukes can commit solecisms which are hazardous in the gentleman who has to work for his living. I hold that the gentleman is the equal of the monarch on his throne; but my advice to the sensitive gentleman is to hold aloof from low society if he would save himself from mortifications. By low society I do not mean those who wear threadbare clothes—the millionaire may be a mean vulgarian—but those who are low in manners and morals, ignorant and presumptuous. But I am getting didactic, and must hark back to my theme.

In mighty London I wandered about much, voluntarily losing my bearings in the labyrinth of streets. This was not time thrown away, for there is always something to be learned by those who can read as they run. Exploring the slums of Spitalfields, leaning over the railings in

the Row, reverently waking the echoes on the stone flooring of the Abbey, gliding along the waters of the lordly Thames, or drinking in the morning air on Hampstead Heath, there is ever present ample material to be jotted down in a note-book.

There were two places in London which I avoided—the House of Parliament and the Reading-room of the British Museum—avoided for the good reason that they both sent me asleep. In one and the other there is the drowsy sense of self-restraint, a mustiness of atmosphere, and the indefinable odour of stale upholstery. I preferred my own bookshelf to the national collection, Cogers' Hall to the Imperial Senate. There was more comfort in the former, more vitality in the latter.

What rare speeches I have heard in that Cogers' Hall, mostly as ungrammatical and daringly regardless of orthöepy as if they were

spoken in Westminster itself! There is a chairman—"the Grand" they style him—aged, and with an assumption of authority, tempered by a readiness to accept treats, which is very impressive to country cousins. Then there are the stock orators of the company, retained on the establishment in order to keep the ball of controversy rolling. Many of them, I am afraid, have slight scruples as to which side of a question they advocate; they are as zealous *pro* as *con* on most themes. So broad-minded, indeed, are they, so quick of perception and full of illustration, that they are ready to deliver themselves on any subject without more preparation than is exacted by perusing the latest leading article. And how various are the subjects handled! Nothing, from the big find of Dr. Schliemann in Africa to the big loss of a Transatlantic steamer is foreign to this pot-house *conciliabulum*. They are perpetually in the mood

of him who would use the hackneyed sentence of Terence.

There were four of the stock speakers in this cabinet of oddities who deserve to be singled out for mention. One was a native of an American State of the South, who was eloquent on the glories and wrongs of the Confederacy. He artfully turned all topics into his favourite runnel of thought. Were it a debate on a patent fire-extinguisher he would introduce a reference to the fights in the Wilderness; were it a dissertation on the agricultural system of Belgium he would edge in a brilliant eulogium of the *Alabama* privateer and "Stonewall" Jackson. He used to support himself by painting portraits, but even in the domain of art his ruling passion was not to be evaded. His masterpiece—the ill-natured used to hint that it was the only portrait he *could* paint—was a likeness of George Washington; and when a commission to reproduce the linea-

ments of some travelling American shed an infrequent ray of sunshine on his attic, he invariably flattered his patron by representing him with a strong family resemblance to the father of his country. I do not know how he arranged it with the ladies—compromised with a modernised suggestion of Martha Washington perhaps. Another remarkable individual was a tall, spare, white-haired, senile Scotchman, brimful of platitudes, but with small education and not much reading outside that of the shallow and ephemeral kind. The high day in this harmless, pragmatical bore's life, was that when he had followed "Sir Walter" down Prince's Street, Edinburgh—some admirers went so far as to say that he had spoken to him; and the episode in his dull career—the mine from which he dug up stray gems to adorn his prosy gossip—was his experience as a volunteer to some Turkish contingent in the Crimean War. He never got

beyond Scutari; but he returned primed with anecdotes which he retailed once a twelvemonth when he gave a lecture in the Hall for his benefit and appeared in Bashi-Bazouk garb of flowing gaberdine, cinctured with an arsenal of lethal weapons, horse-pistols which would assuredly burst and kill somebody if they were discharged, rusty knives and scimitars blunt but destructively corrosive if they only made an abrasion. A countryman of his, the son of a dissenting preacher and a graduate of a Scotch university, was the logician of the assembly. A close and ready reasoner, keen and accomplished, he ought to have made a name for himself other than the name he had—that of a feckless and pauperised sot, who was careless as to the cleanliness of his linen when he had aught to wear, and was the jeer of pert jackanapes who had not a tithe of his talents. He squandered his gifts. This man would have earned a decent

income by writing to order sensational biographies or highly-spiced pamphlets on political topics of the hour. But he was fascinated by the grosser charms of sordid symposia on small ale and unsweetened gin.

The Cogers' being an unchartered school, naturally there was an Irishman to the fore—more naturally that it was unchartered. What a winning manner was his, as he poured forth a silvery stream of sentences in blandest tones and with accents oily smooth. His language was as florid as his complexion; his figures of speech as brilliant and artificial as the pearl-studs on his shirt-cuffs; his reasoning faculty usually as vacuous as his purse. He had a commanding presence, and was fond of sporting a white waistcoat and a flower in his button-hole. Tom came of a highly respectable Hibernian family, was a graduate of Trinity College, and had been in his time a stipendiary magistrate in Munster, and a functionary on the Gold Coast.

He was an ardent admirer of O'Connell, "the august Liberator" as he loved to call him; but was so hopelessly in arrear of the spirit of the age that he fancied a flag of white, sparged with golden lilies, would satisfy the cravings of France, and bring it internal peace and honour abroad. He posed ostentatiously as a Tory, but owned in his heart of hearts that he was a Whig. In my heart of hearts, I believe he was an Opportunist. No one was more ready to tell pleasant tales, the point of which ought to have stung himself. He used to relate that a negro was brought before him once, on a charge of indiscreet joviality. The culprit was sentenced to carry a weight on his head for so many hours—a form of punishment Tom had devised. The darky scratched his woolly pate, and gazed up at his judge in mute admiration.

"What are you thinking of, Cæsar Augustus?" asked the functionary.

"I'm thinking, massa, what a po'ful strong pusson yo' must a' bin in yo'r country!"

During the pre-ballot era, he was in great request as an electioneering agent, and was sometimes proposed as a make-believe candidate, in order that he might have the chance of a rejoinder to any attacks on his patron by the rival candidate. On one of these occasions, he went with a young lord to a northern borough of Calvinistic proclivities. The nobleman was a political noodle, knew more of Leicestershire coverts than the British Constitution, looked at ivied ruins from the utilitarian standpoint, and relegated the entire conduct of his canvass to his companion. Tom made a glowing speech about the imperious obligations of the crisis, and the particular importance of Scotland, which was the salt of the empire, showing a good example, and wound up by a superbly rhapsodical allusion to the religious and patriotic traditions

of the land, and a panegyric on John Knox, which brought flushes of triumph and tears of emotion into the cheeks of his auditors.

His lordship was called upon to address the free and independent; his remarks were brief and appropriate. He said: "My friend has thoroughly expressed my sentiments."

When the meeting was over, one of the constituency waited upon Tom, and, after some humming and hawing, begged to ask if he was right in recollecting that he had met and heard him in the Cogers' Hall in London.

"Very likely, my friend," said Tom.

"Then," exclaimed the Scotchman, grasping his hand, "I'm verra glad to see you have come to the right way of thinking. Doon yon you said John Knox was the biggest scoondrel ever lived!"

Tom was not a bit flurried. "Ah! true, my friend; most likely I did. After all 'tis very much a question of latitude."

These open elections were conducted with more spirit and were riper in humorous incidents than those of the present hole-and-corner epoch. Edmond O'Donovan, who volunteered to promote the return of John Martin for Longford, often made me laugh by his reminiscences of that campaign. One of his allies was a gaunt, gawky barrister of the cadaverous class, which they graphically generalise in Ireland as "churchyard deserters." His influence when he first essayed to speak in public was completely neutralised by a beggar-woman in the opposite interest, who nicknamed him "the unholy ghost." But Edmond succeeded in gaining the masses to his side by his impassioned appeals from the top of a hogshead.

"While I was casting around mentally," he said, "for a few sentences for my peroration, with an occasional downward look at the hogshead, which was swaying under the pressure of

the mob, and threatened to go over, I imagined I saw an eminence at the end of the street. There was my cue. I besought my fellow-countrymen by their veneration for those ancestors whose bones rested in that hallowed mound below, and whose sanctified ghosts had their eyes upon them, to be true to the cause of God and Ireland, truth and manhood — the cause which was championed by John Martin, stainless confessor and stedfast martyr of nationality. I was rather taken aback that evening when a gentleman of the town told me that the hallowed mound of my imagination was in reality a heap of compost he had got together for his next potato-planting!"

There are those who may consider the Cogers' Hall a very common place to frequent, and recollections connected with it tinged with plebeianism. But they may change their minds when they learn that it was Conservative in the tone of its politics, that Thackeray, Dickens,

Halliday, and Blanchard Jerrold did not disdain to write of it; that Louis Napoléon condescended to visit it; and that orators of unequal fame, from the late Judge Keogh to the eccentric George Francis Train, made its ceiling ring with the volume of their voices. To my knowledge, senators who habitually scold Mr. Gladstone graduated on its benches. It is an excellent and most convenient spot for young barristers to make their fledgling flights of eloquence, and is fruitful in strange individualities. It is true that flippancy and a prodigious self-conceit may be superinduced by a course of attendance there; but there is no denying that if a man has the gift of tongues it is brought out, the lesson of thinking on one's legs is taught, and a lofty scorn for interruption is developed. They are sticklers for the etiquette of public discussion, and two rules are adopted which, I respectfully submit, might be copied, with modifications, in

the building at Westminster, to wit: no speaker is allowed to talk beyond a certain limit, and philosophic solace, which helps meditation and harmonises the judicial organs, is encouraged, in the shape of long clay pipes and pots of beer.

If one were skilful with his pencil, what an album of the Cruikshank order he could fill in a few sittings of this parliament of the self-elected! Here is a vehement Radical, a leader of the pavement, who is fierce on domestic tyranny, and tries to thrash his wife when he returns home, but consistently gets "walloped" by her instead. Beside him is a writer of travels, who has never voyaged farther than Ramsgate; and yet, it is on the record, that a story on China, by this merest of booksellers' hacks, was favourably noticed in a classic review in the very same number in which a work by Captain Sherard Osborn was dismissed with a patronising

fillip. The pock-pitted young-old Hibernian, with the wild shock of rebellious red hair, is a puzzle; some think he is a priest *manqué*, others, a law-student, others still, a penny-a-liner. All may be wrong; he may be that mysterious entity vaguely described as "something in the City." There is no dispute on one point: he is a fluent debater, and has a treasury of queer desultory information arranged for immediate use in the drawers of his brain.

Among the extraordinary personages — they who are out of the common herd, surely, are personages — whose acquaintance I made at Cogers' Hall, was one irascible soldier of fortune, who invited me to his chambers overlooking the Thames Embankment.

"Ah!" he said, as we entered, "this suite of rooms was historic in the past, my boy. Do you know who rented it once?"

I had not the most remote idea, but hardly

anybody more distinguished than my host, I ventured to remark.

"Yes, sir; here—even here—lodged Alexander the Great!"

"What!" I cried. "Alexander of Macedon?"

"The very same. Do you doubt my word, sir? I can assure you it is a fact. Ah! these walls could tell tales!"

As I was untwisting my way down the staircase at leaving, a voice from the lobby arrested me.

"I made a slight anachronism. It was not Alexander the Great. *It was Peter the Great!*"

CHAPTER VIII.

Thoughts on Style—Newspaperese—The Writer is rebuked for Vulgarity by an Able Editor—"Rubbish shot here"—The Cant of Criticism—Miss Braddon's First Book—Professional Critics like Professional Beauties—The British Stage—The Press of to-day—Bohemia nearing Corinth—The Ideal Newspaper—The Editorial Bed of Procrustes to the Flames!

To one brought up in Ireland, where Macaulay, with the splendours of his monotonous rhetoric, is too often accepted as the gauge of a perfect style, there is an almost irresistible tendency to run riot in sesquipedalian floridity. In measured oratory, now and again, this may be effective, but in essay or narrative it is bad. Instead of a clear picture, a vague cloudy spread of phrase —*vox et prœterea parvum*—is called up before the mind. I had great difficulty in freeing myself

from this fondness for fine writing, rhythm, and balance, in whatever I attempted, and in my endeavour to escape from the bondage of early training, almost went into the other extreme. I tried to possess myself of all the short forceful Saxon words I could, the homelier the better, the words that ring out sharply like a steel hammer on an anvil, and leave no doubt as to their meaning. Anything, I thought, was better than to sink to the level of newspaperese—the geometrical Italian garden style of composition. But it was no easy job to go against usage. Neither is it to divest oneself of the acquired tricks of a mistaken teaching, the pat rules of the pedants who are more solicitous how a message is told than what the message is you have to tell, and are horrified if you begin three consecutive sentences with the same word, or end a sentence with a unisyllable. Manner to them is more important than matter; but, as I have said, it is no easy

job to shake off a faulty manner. The errors of the Irish school had not been repaired by the stay in France in my case. I was losing my English without the compensation of mastering French. Had I remained much longer in Paris I could have manipulated neither language. When a man unconsciously gives literal translation of a French idiom in a letter in English, and prays a friend not to call on him on a certain day as he will not be "with himself" (*chez lui*), instead of "at home," it is high hour to change the venue. It was lucky for me in that sense that I came to London; but I had more to unlearn than to learn. I was much in the position of the cavalry recruit who has taught himself to ride by scampering over hedges and ditches on bare-backed horses, and is asked to assume the formal seat and stiff back of the *manège*. Sub-editorial tinkering with my writing to me was an intolerable nuisance, for I took pains with what I wrote, and had a

pride in it, and I could not help thinking that sometimes changes were made out of pure wantonness to show one's privilege of intermeddling, and very often that the persons who made them knew no more of what they were touching than the pig which grubs in the soil does of scientific husbandry. The old grievance—which *will* come up—the absence of signatures to articles, the reader will say; but I must at it, for I am one of those who believe in dinging at a nail until it is driven in to the head.

One able editor to whom I submitted some contributions was highly pleased with them; but remonstrated with me, with a grave gentleness, on the vulgarity of some of my expressions. For example, sweat—sweat was a vile word, perspiration was more modish; and then what a slangy phrase that was, "I am escaped by the skin of my teeth." The able editor had never read Genesis or Job. He reminded me of a lady of

nice taste who would allude to Moore's melody "The Bard's Legacy" only as the "Bard's Bequest."

My faith in that able editor was shaken when he spoke thus; it was completely upset when he visited my rooms and approaching the bookshelves remarked that he was glad I admired Macmillan, as he gazed on the lettering on the back of a bound set of the magazines of that name—"Macmillan was a serious writer, but wasn't he rather voluminous?" To my thinking now, the direct simplicity of General Gordon has more strength than the rolling periods of Dr. Johnson, and, in your high flights, Ruskin is far and away before Bulwer—one is the graceful Leotard on his trapeze, the other the performer on stilts; but my thoughts, I am aware, are peculiar to the point of heterodoxy, and constables will continue to be "active and efficient," and lessees "spirited and enterprising," and the Stock Exchange still rule as the barometer of public opinion.

The appointed work I was principally engaged on at this time—that is when I did work, which was seldom—was criticising books. These criticisms were published when there was space vacant, but never provoked much attention. I question if one person in ten read them. Those who did not read them lost little thereby. There are reviewers who glance over prefaces or title-pages only, I have been given to understand, and yet are so electric-witted that on the insight thus acquired they can supply an exhaustive analysis of the contents of a volume and an academic judgment of its style. I was more scrupulous, I always used the paper-knife and wrote as I felt. But the work was wearisome and hateful; to provide ten lines of copy one had to wade through tens of thousands of lines, and to secure an appreciative public the temptation to be cynical and evolve caustic epigrams was very strong. This effort to be smart is a shabby vice. The publishers

must not be blamed for bringing out elegantly-bound volumes of twaddle every season so long as the authors make it worth their while by standing all risks and paying a fat commission—no respectable publisher does this, I hope—but it is cruel for the critic to burn with nitric acid into those who have already been scarified by the publishers. To be sure, he may plead that it is cruel to ask him to read twaddle. My notion is that reviews of this class of books should be put in a corner to themselves headed "rubbish shot here," and that with regard to the really valuable productions, Mr. Critic (whose name is not always Puff) should act as index-finger and point out to the wayfarer that that way lies something interesting.

There is a world of *cant in criticism; as every* eye forms its own ideal of *beauty, every educated* mind might be left to shape its own verdict on what it reads. It will come to this eventually,

when the human race will cease to be *moutons de Panurge*, that is to say, about the period when the skies fall, and we shall all be busy catching larks. At present, fashion rules in literature as in the pattern of bonnets; worthless books, like inelegant *toques*, are sometimes pushed into prominence, but only for a season; and the meagre of intellect often take their opinions at second-hand, as the meagre of means do their clothes. Because of this, criticism is potent. A column of a review in the *Times* made the success of the most successful of modern English lady novelists, and placed her on a high and assured pinnacle as a fictionist. Notwithstanding, "Lady Audley's Secret" had previously appeared in a serial, and had passed unco amended.

In art-criticism, which I never attempted, and dramatic criticism, to which I must plead guilty to have contributed, the cant is ranker and more grievous still. If I like a play or a picture, I do

not care who derides them; but the presumption is that some persons are such born-idiots that they cannot see the beauty of colour and form unless it is pointed out to them—cannot take heart to melt at sorrow, or burn at passion, or wax cheerful at the magnetic sparkle of wit, until they are advised by some didactic authority that it is correct by precedent. Heaven pity those who cannot enjoy their National Gallery or their Shakespeare or Sheridan without an omniscient cicerone (who may not be Ciceronian) at their elbows! The professional critic I dislike as I do the professional beauty, not personally, but because of his profession (for several of them are good friends of mine), and if I had a theatre to-morrow, I would never think of inviting his professional presence. *Quot homines, tot sententiæ.* I fondle my own *sententias.* These critics, I solemnly believe, are upright and honourable gentlemen; but where have they got the gift of perceptiveness

which raises their views so high above others? Is there an apprenticeship to their calling, as to doctorates of divinity, law, and medicine? Are their opinions infallible? They have experience, they have nurtured their taste with extensive reading, they are skilled at composition; and nevertheless, were I a lessee of a playhouse, I would prefer the ingenuous hand-clapping of Mr. Smith in the pit, and the enthusiastic feet-shuffling of Jack in the gallery, to the elaborate praise, in neatly-turned sentences, of all the critics. The which, foregoing, will prepare the reader for the confession that I was pronounced a failure as a dramatic critic: I could see nothing but buffoonery in the antics of the great Clipper; the greater Snipper made me roar when he tried to be pathetic; and Whipper, the greatest of all, impressed me as more of a melodramatic tatter-tearer than a Heaven-sent tragedian. I used to rub lightly on the actors, unless they were in-

excusably bad, attitudinised like wooden images, or mispronounced words—an inconsiderate remark may often cause the salary of a father of a family to be docked—but I took it out of the authors! There I vented my bile; they were of my own craft, they had no right to foist their abortions on the public as healthy full-grown infants. It so happened that, in my critical perversity, I declared all the plays I saw to be feeble. But I had the Continental standard of perfection before my eyes, and may have expected too much. Seeing this, it may be asked why did not I myself write a play, and reform the British stage? To be candid, I was vain then, and could not bring myself to take the measure of a theatrical company for a suit of literary clothes. Now that I am modest, I lack the constructive power, the ingenious inventiveness, and the freshness and delicacy of touch. I feel that I have failed to realise the promise of

earlier years; I am a disappointed man, my cream has turned to curds, and I am as sour as any disappointed man can be, who has a good digestion, a happy homestead, and some true friends still left.

It may insinuate itself into the noddle of some uncharitable wight, light of apprehension, that I am heaping up sly reproaches in these unburdenings of mine against newspapers and those who write for them. I repel the notion. It is my glory to belong to the press: we have yet to greet the ideal newspaper, but I hold that the London newspaper is the nearest approach to the ideal we can boast of, and that at no era—let the *laudatores temporis acti,* peevish and captious still as in the days of Horace, prate as they may—was there so slight symptom of literary decadence. It would be invidious to name names, but in my own sphere of intimacy I have known quiet men, engaged in Fleet Street and its tributaries, who

sit down to write leading articles and narratives of masquerade and shipwreck, pageant and execution, as they occur in the ordinary round of their toil, which would have made an immortal reputation in the times of the *Tatlers*, the *Spectators*, and the *Guardians*. The writer no longer cultivates literature on oatmeal. The garret of Chatterton is unknown to him, nor does he perish in his lean pride. As a fact, he distributes his attic salt on a drawing-room floor, is wise on plovers' eggs, puts on tissue, and pays the rates. So with the kindred vocations. The modern painter presides at luxurious feasts; the modern composer keeps his steam-yacht; the modern poet, with fine frenzy, casts one eye cloudwards, while with the other he keenly scans a bank-note to make sure of the water-mark; even that acknowledged mediocrity, the modern playwright, turns in his thirty thousand pounds a year, while his name has its glamour for the managers. Shakespeare never made so

much; but he was not respectable. Were there not some stories about wenching and poaching, and a resort to that desperate and exceedingly trampish mode of picking up coppers—holding horses?

Truth to tell, Bohemia is nearing the borders of Corinth; and so much the better, for it is fitting that there should be a purer and more self-respecting Bohemia than Murger's, a Bohemia that wears clean shirts and changes them regularly, that discharges its debts, that loves women and children and dumb creatures, that contemns conventionality and cant, and under the thin veneer of jocularity can carry a proud, an earnest, and a purposeful spirit.

In the ideal newspaper there should be colloquial briskness, as in America; there should be some solidity, or appearance of solidity, as in England. There should be no insolent interviewing, no palpably-expanded telegrams, no

Divorce Court trials; there should be pen-and-ink photographs of public meetings, as well as accurate reports of the important speeches; there should be no puffs of patent medicines and foolishnesses similar, no statistics that could be avoided, no meteorological charts or enormous gooseberry trifling, "no scandal about Queen Elizabeth," and as little of Parliamentary inanity as might be. Whatever there was of seriousness there, by whomsoever spoken, should be impartially given. The great object should be to produce a live and lively newspaper. The first step towards that consummation is to break away from the stupid tradition of the leading article, run in the mould. Every great London daily regularly appears with its three or four grave declarations of opinion on current topics every morning. I will allow that these are all wonderfully well written, notwithstanding I have my suspicion that some of them *must* have been

written at racing pace; that they are all carefully thought out, although traces of the hastily caught-up cyclopædia will obtrude, and that they are free from party bias. But there is one point which I cannot allow, namely, that every subject, whether a railway collision, a ministerial dissolution, a *pronunciamiento* in Madrid, or a jewel robbery in Hatton Garden, should be meted out with the same measure. Yet so it is. The spider on the staff has to spin out his filament to a uniform length, averaging from one column to one column and a third, no matter whether the subject is worth it or not. The subject may be trifling, and he may have exhausted his ideas on it; no matter, he must go on—he has his allotted space to fill. The subject is suggestive, and he may have more to say upon it that is original and worth reading; no matter, he must stop—he cannot exceed his limit. This Procrustean bed in the editorial room has always struck me as a piece of furniture

which should be smashed up forthwith for firewood. Mr. John Hollingshead said somewhere that most writers were like a hurdy-gurdy, and had only a certain number of tunes to play. When they got through them, they should change their pitch. Mr. Hollingshead was sensible; but many newspaper writers are treated as if they were a species of thinking automata. When that model of completeness, the ideal newspaper, appears, I shall be very much dead.

CHAPTER IX.

A Glimpse of Charles Dickens—Live Brain-offspring—The Hawker's Opinion of the Novelist—A Beautiful Writer—Daniel O'Connell and Little Nell—Dickens in Africa—A Moor inquiring for Mark Twain—Tom Hood—"The Well of English Undefyled"—Californian Humour—"When Greeks joined Greeks"—Henry S. Leigh—Dagonet Sims—Chelsea Grievances—An Insult to Nelson.

THERE was an aged Scottish gentleman on the *Standard* named Bryce. He told me his first engagement in London was on the *Morning Chronicle*, where he was requested to take the place of a promising young man who was foolishly about to give up the assured comfort of a reporter's salary to try his chances at literature. The young man was Charles Dickens. Auspicious day for the world when he turned

his back on the drudgery of the recording mission for that of the creative. It has been one of the regrets of my life that I never heard Dickens speak. I saw him once—I am sure it was he—gazing intently into a jeweller's window in the Rue de Rivoli. He was airily dressed in a bright blue sack-coat, and looked longer at the array of gems and ornaments than any man but a shoplifter or the writer of the sketches of an Uncommercial Traveller should have looked. He was attracted by the glitter of those precious stones as a Jew might have been, but with different motives, albeit he himself had some pretty trinkets dangling at his watch-chain. He stopped twenty minutes outside that window, and I stopped twenty minutes gazing at him. I am unwilling to grant that it might not have been the great novelist, so dearly do I cling to this prized recollection. The news of his death, which occurred during this sojourn of mine in

London, fell as with the weight of a personal loss upon thousands. It was astonishing to hear how familiar his name was to the orders of the population which might be supposed to have no love of reading, and into what queer corners his books had penetrated. There are characters of fiction as real and tangible as any that ever lived, such as Don Quixote, Jack Falstaff, Mawworm, Tony Lumpkin, Quasimodo—characters of the imagination which will last longer than most of those which had breathing existence. It was the privilege of Dickens to have created almost a gallery of those. As I sit at my desk and close my eyes I can see them, plain as on the boards of a brilliantly lit theatre, defiling before me—Mr. Samuel Pickwick, in the plenitude of his beaming pot-bellied beneficence; the hop-light-loo, turn-about-and-wheel-about Jim Crow Jingle; whimsical Sam Weller; the odious Pecksniff; the genial, happy-go-lucky Mark Tapley; Chadband,

with his greasy sneakishness; and that, to me, finest of figures in his finest of works, Sydney Carton, with his thin, fathomless, predestined face, sharp-cut, with the lip-curve of a half-cynical disappointment. Anecdotes were rife anent the marvellous writer—how he used to dance a hornpipe like a home-coming sailor when in a railway carriage on his reading tour; how he was denied extra sugar in his coffee by a pert bar-maid at Rugby until he would pay for it; how he was often taken for a gamekeeper—mostly mythical anecdotes—and I hearkened to them all with attentive ear.

One evening I met a loquacious hawker of nick-nacks in a tavern off Ludgate Hill. He was holding forth on Dickens, whom he had known for years. Here, I flattered myself, was a find. I paid for beer, and gin, and bread and cheese for that man, and stood him a "three-penny smoke" on which he had set his heart;

and then, cautiously creeping up to my subject, I asked him was he sorry for the loss England had sustained.

"Ah! that I am, sir; main sorry. England *has* sustained a loss; but England can put up with many a loss. 'Tis Kent, I'm feelin' has a right to complain. I knew both the Misters Dickens; the old gentleman had always a friendly word for me, and admired my bowling. He kept a tidy eleven together and no mistake. The young man was fairish enough; but I tell you, and I know as says it, as a cricketer, he wa'n't a patch on the old un."

"What!" I exclaimed; "is it possible you only knew of Dickens as a cricketer?"

"What do you take me for? In course I ain't such a ninny all out as that. Doesn't every fool know that he was the biggest book-maker goin'? He bought Gad's Hill out of his winnings over one year's Derby!"

Such is fame! It may be that Mr. Gladstone is known in some regions as a very prosperous cabinet-maker. There are English boys who never heard of the great Duke of Wellington, and Englishmen who confound Wolseley of Tel-el-Kebir with a certain haughty Churchman who has been mouldering to dust for centuries; so that, after all, this mistake of the hawker about Dickens may be venial. America is not without examples of a similar muddle-headedness. John Savage related to me how he was once followed in Westchester County in New York State, where he was stopping for a vacation, by an old farmer.

"Excuse me, sir," said the agriculturist, "but I've been watching the opportunity to speak to you for days. I hear tell you're a beautiful writer."

The poet was flattered that his reputation had extended so far, and said so.

"Well," continued the farmer, bashfully, "I

was thinking of asking you a favour, if I might be so bold?"

"Go on, my friend; if it is anything in my way, I shall be most happy to grant it."

"This is how it is, you see, mister: our schoolmaster is getting old and awkward-like, and as you're such a beautiful writer, mebbe you mightn't mind setting a few head-lines in my boys' copy-books?"

The most unaffected tribute which was ever rendered to Dickens came from a source where one would never look for it, and at a time when one would look for it least of all. It was in the height of the Repeal agitation. "The Old Curiosity Shop" was coming out in monthly numbers in green covers. Daniel O'Connell had attended a meeting on the Hill of Grange, in North Tipperary, near my native town. On his return, the Tribune was accompanied by the stipendiary

magistrate of the district whom he had invited to have a lift.

"Pardon me," he said, producing the last issued of the green numbers, "I am deeply interested in this book."

As he read his forehead contracted to a scowl, and flinging up the carriage window, he cast the serial out into the roadway.

"I shall never read another line by that man," he exclaimed, "he should not have killed that little girl!"

He had been overcome by the pathetic account of the death of Little Nell; and the big-bodied politician, the moving spirit in a storm-whirl of popular excitement, forgot all about the oppressions of the brutal Saxon and the sorrows of the finest peasantry under the sun, and was affected almost to tears at the story of this wee lassie from the land of shadows.

In my own experience I can bear testimony

to a compliment paid to the genius of the great writer—as veritably Wizard of the South as Scott was of the North—of which any man might be proud. I was travelling in Africa and visited the lighthouse of Spartel on the coast of Morocco, a point from which a view is commanded of the water on which was fought the sea-fight of Trafalgar.

This Phare de Spartel is tenanted by three keepers, representing respectively the nations by whom it was built and is maintained, one French, one Spanish, and one English, a rock-scorpion (as the Gibraltar natives are called). In the room of the latter I sat down to lunch. Over the mantel-piece I noticed a number of wood-cuts and steel engravings posted triangularly on the wall. The apex of the triangle, high above royal personages, eminent statesmen, world-renowned vocalists, wedding festivities, and scenes of furious battle, was a portrait of Charles Dickens!

Another remarkable incident connected with a member of the Guild of Literature, but one who has made his celebrity in a different field from Dickens, occurred to me during that visit to Africa, and although it is out of its regular date here, I may be pardoned for relating it, as I may not have the opportunity again. It was my first time of setting foot on the tawny, barren, sun-blistered shore of the wrinkled, trackless, dark Continent. I was landing at Tangier, not from a boat, but from the back of a bent Barbary Jew, a most unheroic and undignified position. As he dropped me dry-footed on the sands, a majestic figure, turbaned, white-robed, yellow-sandalled, with the grave countenance of a half-pay Othello, and a complexion like the Prince of Morocco, "the shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun," moved towards me with stately steps. It was the Moor of my youthful dreams. He made a severe bow, and said in excellent English:

"Do you know Mark Twain?"

This was my greeting to the ancient Libya. If a douche of iced water had been dashed in my face I could not have felt more astonished. Was this, then, a practical joke, and my questioner but a Moor of masquerade? I was not long left in uncertainty.

"If you mean Mr. Clemens, the American, who writes funny books under that name, I do."

"He has mentioned me in one of them," and the majestic figure produced from one of his wide sleeves Hotten's pirated edition of "The Innocents Abroad," and pointed to a turned-down page.

This was the Hadji Mohammed Lamarty, who had been interpreter with the British forces in the Crimea, and his extraordinary demand had been inspired by the purely commercial anxiety to call attention to his capabilities as a guide.

Tom Hood, gone to his grave before his prime, was one of the literary men whose acquaintance I made at this period. He was most helpful towards strangers; if a new-comer in the domain of letters had anything in him he took him by the hand, and did not stop to inquire into his country or creed. The stuff was there; that was enough for him; and the proof that his judgment was sound is given by the reputation since attained by some of the staff he gathered around him on *Fun*. W. S. Gilbert, G. R. Sims, and Henry S. Leigh were among his contributors. He was a tall, handsome man, with delicately-chiselled features and coal-black hair; but there was that distressful ivory hue on his cheeks which forebodes early death. What gay evenings we used to have in that left-hand corner of the Ludgate Hill Bar, what a cross-fire of playful banter, and what startling, unpremeditated displays of verbal pyrotechnics! Like the "Mermaid" of Ben Jonson's

epoch, it was a resort of wits. Sala was sometimes of the "school," but those usually present were William Sawyer; Henry Lee, the naturalist ("The Commodore" we called him), glowing from behind his glasses; Crawford Wilson, who would recite you Byron on the slightest provocation; E. P. Hingston, the travelled friend of Artemus Ward; Bierce, the Californian humorist; now and again burly, genial Chris Pond, and Hood's *Achates fidus et fortis*, Henry Sampson. How jealous he was of interference with Hood! If an interloper were to hint offence at the lovable Tom, I do believe Sampson would go at him like a British bull-dog and bite him to shreds. Hood was fond of chaffing me on my bizarre English, and his chaff was returned to the best of my power. I laid a plan to take my satisfaction, and, having armed myself the previous night, brought on a discussion *à propos* of nothing on the old subject, remarking that there were very few Englishmen

who were really familiar with their own language, and small blame to them.

"Nonsense!" said Hood; "Pooh, pooh!" exclaimed Crawford Wilson; "How can *you* know anything about it?" remarked somebody else, "you're only a wild Irishman, with a coating of French polish."

"Well," I answered, "that is my opinion, at all events, and I am a bit of a zetetic."

"A what?" exclaimed Wilson.

I took no notice, but said to Henry Lee that I supposed they were about to afford me one of their customary examples of the probabilities of zoomorphism.

"By-the-by, Lee," I added, "hasn't that fellow who has just come into the bar a neck like a yunx?"

"He has," answered Lee, "but don't let him hear you."

"What language is the coon talking?" cried Bierce.

"English, my friend," I answered; "but as you are only an American I don't wonder at your complexion growing xanthic."

Tom Hood burst into such a happy convulsion of laughter. He had found me out.

"Boys," he said, when he recovered himself, "this is too bad! Zetetic, zoomorphism, yunx, xanthic, X, Y, Z. Don't you see? O'Shea is reading the English dictionary at last, and with his incurable cussedness, as Bierce would say, he has begun at the wrong side of the book."

Bierce, or "Dod Grile," as his pseudonym ran, was the inventor of that American species of humour of which the following paragraph may be accepted as a sample:

"Little Johnny Hopkins, of Sycamore Street, found a petroleum-can in the back yard. He thought he would have a game with it. The coffin was lined with white satin."

This is effective when first heard, but it

begins to pall after the thousand-and-first repetition. I do not like American humour, except that of Oliver Wendell Holmes. It is too apt to make light of the solemn, and button-hole the lawgiver Moses.

I took down the "school" on another occasion that I was vexed by a fussy, vulgar, rough-fibred Ulster pressman, who corrected my Greek. The Greek—it was Greek to him—was the frogs' onomatopœia from Aristophanes. I was annoyed—I should not have been annoyed—by the bleating of this mouthing calf, who was always talking newspaper shop, and knew everything, and more than everything, about the army and the navy and the 'Varsity likewise.

"Cease, rude bore and ass, blustering railer," I apostrophised the egotistical hulk, "you do not know the Greek for a rod from the Greek for a rose."

"Do you, O'Shea?" asked Hood.

"Yes, ῥάβδος is one, ῥόδον the other."

"'Ρόδον did you say? I lay you a bottle of Chablis 'tis an omega not an omicron."

I got my opportunity and pounced upon it as a starveling would upon a soup-ticket. By the merest chance I had been reading Anacreon shortly before and rolled them out the Ode to Spring, opening:

Ἴδε πῶς, ἔαρος φανέντος,
Χάριτες ῥόδα βρύουσιν.

I triumphantly asked them to scan that and show me the omega in the second line. Hood admitted I was right; but I was sorry I spoke. Whenever Greek was introduced subsequently, a portentous silence would fall upon the assembly and somebody would whisper in voice of warning that there was one present, and

—'tis known he could speak Greek
As naturally as pigs squeak.

Henry S. Leigh was one of the most thorough-

going Cockneys to be encountered. The universe for him was bounded by Holborn to the north and the Thames to the south, the heights of Ludgate to the east, and the desert where Landseer's lions repose to the west. The Strand, of which he sang, was his all in all; its gossip, its opinions, its freaks, were more to him than the concerns of Zollverein or Vatican; the latest *bon mot* (which, even when it was his own, he religiously went about repeating) was more important than the last utterance of a Premier; the ripping up of the parish pavement by the gas companies more eventful than the shock of empires. This caroller of Cockayne laboured to prove himself a cynic, as if cynicism is anything to be conceited over, but I feel somehow that he was generous of disposition at bottom. He was readiest of versifiers, but he never did himself justice. Socially he was in much request, being a fair pianist as well as a *bel esprit*. He was indolent

and wrote for a coterie; he had originality, yet he narrowed himself to adaptations. There are too many bright fellows maundering about London who get into this coterie channel and are carried away by the applause of vapid parasites when they might be making a name; some of them go on foolishly tootling into the pipe of Pan when they are competent to touch the lyre of Apollo.

George R. Sims, who has jumped into such a sudden success since, was an observant man in town then, bursting with ideas, but unable to find a lessee or a publisher. His friends knew the vein was there, and he knew it himself like Sheridan and Disraeli, and was confident that some day he would work it to advantage. His turn has come, and bountifully he has justified his own faith in himself, and realised the hopes of his admirers. He who has made the name of King Arthur's squire a household word in many a humble room, and who presents such

a curious blending of faculties—acid political satirist, popular ballad-writer, ingenious playwright, good story-writer, and true social reformer—is, above all things, desperately in earnest in all he sets about, a retiring, indefatigable man, full of a most noble love for animals.

One of my favourite amusements was to travel up and down by the river steamers betwen Chelsea and Greenwich for hours, with now and again a call into the Hospitals at either end. The veterans at Chelsea have their grievances, although they are well treated in the main. Englishmen, I suppose, must grumble. They have no allowance of tobacco, and a private can hardly grant himself the luxury out of his pocket-money of sevenpence a week when other needs are attended to; and when they die they do not get the honour of a military funeral. This latter is a sentimental ache; but surely, when the recruit, who has hardly finished learning the goose-step, is entitled to his "Dead March

in Saul" and his three volleys, these war-worn ancients should be laid to rest with similar compliments. Instead they are trundled off to Brompton Cemetery in charge of a sergeant, corporal, and three comrades. There is a painting in the dining-hall by an R.A., which I always failed to persuade the fogeys, did not, in this instance, mean Royal Artillery. I think it a pity to have moved the seamen inmates from Greenwich, that palace of sea-kings, as Peter of Russia considered it. The Nelson relics there had a positive fascination for me, and I still make it a point of inspecting them every time I am in the neighbourhood.

It is instructive to notice that the Admiral's decorations are sewn, not temporarily attached, to his uniform. He scorned to sanction any effacement which would hide his identity from the enemy. The marks of his blood, on the white waistcoat he wore, when he received his

death-wound, are still as plain under the glass case as a recent iron-mould. A letter from his hand, asking the Governor of Gibraltar to cause a false statement of the ships he had with him to be inserted in the *Gibraltar Gazette*, lest the foeman might be frightened from coming out of Cadiz, shows the necessity and utility of telling lies in the honourable pursuit of warfare. There is one picture in the Nelson room, "The Apotheosis" by B. West, P.R.A., which always to me is an insult and a melancholy puzzle. The corpse of the hero—corpse with a tint to be seen only on one of the Tussaud wax figures—is being wafted aloft, the while an irate kitten gnashes its teeth below, at the apparent loss of a meal, and a Minerva-like personage bearing a scroll with the inscription "five thousand pounds annuity," is inviting the angelic undertaker's men to hurry up. Five thousand pounds annuity. This is bathos in Valhalla with a

vengeance! If B. West, P.R.A., were alive to-day, doubtless he would paint us Salomè carrying the head of the Baptist on an electro-plated charger with a Birmingham trade mark.

CHAPTER X.

Gustave Flourens—On Interviewing—Through the Channel Islands—Jersey Notes—Sea-sickness—Sweet Saint Malo—The Pardon of Guingamp—Breton Costumes—The Holy Fair—Only a Woman's Hair—To Paris once more.

Over in Paris events were ripening to a head. A conspiracy against the Emperor's life had been detected in the April of 1870. There were riots and a feeble attempt to raise the barricades in May; and a fresh plot to assassinate Napoléon III. was discovered at the opening of July. Gustave Flourens was implicated in some or all of these schemes, but escaped to London. I was requested to seek him out and sound him as to his motives. I took a cab at once to a

hotel in the Leicester Square neighbourhood, and boldly asked for Mr. Flourens.

"He has left; he is no longer staying here. He has taken lodgings at No. —, B—— Crescent; but he was here this morning expecting to meet you, and was grieved you did not keep the appointment."

The waiter took me for somebody else, and I might have been an Imperialist spy! I had found Flourens at the first try, caught him by the merest fluke. Forthwith I walked to B—— Crescent, and from the footpath I perceived him writing at a curtainless window on the ground-floor. He received me most amiably, and, when I explained my mission, entered freely into an exposition of his views. These resolved themselves, as far as France was concerned, into the expression that the Empire was synonym for *pourriture*.

"It will soon be a corpse," he said; "but

there is this phenomenon about it—decomposition in this case has preceded death!"

This reads as if I stole an interview with the man—a modern operation of newspaperism against which I have always protested; but I can plead that I was, for private reasons, anxious to make his acquaintance, and that, after we had exhausted our open talk of friendliness, I warned him that in the questions I was then about to put to him I was to be regarded, not as the private visitor, but the cross-examiner for the public, and that if he did not care to be subjected to the ordeal, he had but to say so. The interviewer who forces himself upon anybody without adequate introduction or in a pushing manner, in my opinion, should be shown to the door, and if he will persist in intruding where he is not desired, should be helped to the door. Mr. Edmund Yates agrees with me. This interviewing is a horrid nuisance in the United

States; but the interviewer has his defence there—people generally yearn to be interviewed.

Flourens was the son of a member of the Academy of Sciences, who had written a learned treatise on the art of prolonging life. Casting his father's theories to the breeze, it had been his constant aim to run into every venture that might jeopardise his days. He was always ready to head the forlorn hope of revolution; he seemed to be born but to plot or fight. Among other reckless enterprises with which he had identified himself, was the insurrection in Crete. He had taken to the hills with the partisans there, and had borne himself with an intrepidity, reckless but theatrical, choosing to wear a helmet and fighting garb of the antique Grecian pattern, and exposing himself to danger with the unfaltering fearlessness of fanaticism. He was slight, good-looking, with evidence of his nervo-sanguineous temperament in hair and complexion, and restless

movement; had a large convexity of forehead and the piercing eyes of lunacy. Withal, I was taken with him, for he was true and courteous and brave. But if ever man was possessed, he was. Before that day twelvemonth, he was cleft through the skull right down to the chine by the sabre of a captain of gendarmes after a sortie of the Commune in a village to the Versailles side of Paris.

Urged, I presume, by the favour accorded my letters on the Passion Play, the editor of the *Standard* instructed me to proceed to Guingamp, in Brittany, to write an account of the annual Pardon. The route lay by Southampton and Saint Malo; but as the fixtures of the steamers running between these ports did not suit, I had to go to Jersey and "make connection" there (as the Americans say) with a packet for the French coast. That strip of sea to the Channel Islands is rough, but did not discommode me.

I have crossed between England and the Continent, I should think, about eighty times; and certainly, when going to France, if not pressed for time, I would always choose the line by Southampton and Havre. The boats are large, and the cabins roomy; one is not shuttlecocked about as on those tough steam-corracles, with their wretched clothes-press interiors, between Dover and Calais, and one has not to do a slowly-bobbing minuet, as outside Dieppe, until there is water enough over the bar; besides, Havre is a cheerful city—the greatest city for parrots in Europe—and the railway jaunt thence to Paris, through fruitful Normandy, inspires joviality. But this by the way. We touched at Guernsey, an island which, by its appearance, justified the judgment of Hugo in having selected it as a place of exile. The town, rising amphitheatre-like amid belts of elms, is a pretty and comfortable sight in the morning sun of summer;

but when it is wind-blown and wave-washed in the cold equinox, it must be lone and weird and saddening—most suitable to some poetic moods. I should like to have a return of the winter suicides in Guernsey.

Before we got to Jersey we passed some rocky spots bulging up from the green billows. One of these was Sark. It would make a first-rate convict settlement. Jersey is more French than Algeria, Tunis, or Tonquin; it is French by race, language, and soil. That I could determine in a two hours' stay there. Were I inclined to pad out these pages I could write much of the guide-book order about Jersey—how its Cæsarean cow-cabbage grows to a height above the reach of Anak, son of Arba, and is strong enough to be used as cross rafters; how the island bristles with fortifications, one of which was held by Baron de Rullecourt, an adventurous Frenchman, when he effected a descent, with seven

hundred men, in the January of 1781, and seized the lieutenant-governor; how the local militia are exempt from certain taxes; how the women are comely, and those of different parishes are distinguished by their head-dresses, and so on—but I prefer to confine myself to my own reminiscences. These are simply that I met at dinner a party of Oxford students, who were disgusted that I could not tell them who had won the 'Varsity cricket match, and that an idiot-beggar paraded the pier with a board on his breast with the inscription, "No Jersey pennies accepted." Happy young Englishmen! who had no more engrossing thought than the contests of bat and ball, while a score miles away or so young France was alive with morbid excitements and talked of cabals and regicide, change of dynasty, and vague brooding evil.

On the dancing little steamer to Saint Malo, clean as a yacht, and with that evidence that

we were on British planks, the Bible invitingly open on the saloon-tables, I suffered unspeakable tortures. The sea "wrought and was tempestuous," and I was dreadfully sick, and could only think of the ship of Adramyttium which was caught and tossed by the wind called Euroclydon, and of how miserable Jonah must have been in the fish's belly. For sea-sickness there is but one specific: grin and bear it. However, to all things in this world there is an end, and nature kindly brings early forgetfulness of sea-sickness as of toothache and childbirth. In the home of Chateaubriand, in the identical house (now a hotel) where he was born, I soon recovered myself from the pains of the voyage over a good dinner. Coleridge counted two-and-seventy well-defined stenches, and several stinks in Cologne. I know the city, and unless it has amended its ways since his visit, he libelled it. Beside Saint Malo, Cologne is a warehouse of Rimmel.

It is the dirtiest hole I ever put my foot in. The smells are ancient and fish-like, and worse. I am astonished the howling Atlantic tempests that sweep frothy surges against its rocks and walls, do not retire dismayed. It is quaint, very quaint, as all fortified towns in a hilly position must be because of the narrowness and irregularity of the closely-packed streets; but it would be the better for a general scrubbing and sluicing and lime-washing-day six times a week. Should cholera ever come there, Chateaubriand's memory will not save it. It was with pleasure I left it for my destination, which was not so very far as the crow flies, but involved a tedious railway journey. Guingamp is a town of the Côtés du Nord, in the heart of "Le Bretagne brettonante." I got there on the eve of the Pardon, and managed to secure a bed-room in a ramshackle inn, the best in the place, the landlord of which was in his cups—had so been for weeks—and bored everybody by his

fondness for argumentation and his superfine Parisian notions about religion. To him religion meant superstition, to rail at it was to proclaim enlightenment, and to wallow in drink was the readiest vindication of the rights of man. I had the felicity of seeing him driven up to bed by his hard-working wife, who ruled the roost, and kept a roof over that redoubtable advocate of advanced opinion, her soddened lord and master.

A Pardon is of a kin with the Irish "pattern," a religious function with a fair combined — an occasion for the meeting of neighbours, who combine spiritual duties with secular transactions, such as the sale of pigs and buying of new dresses. There are many such in Brittany, the most prominent amongst them being those of St. Anne d'Auray, of Lannion, and of Plöermel, which has been utilised as theme for an opera by a French composer. Guingamp was thronged by pilgrims and decked with flags. With the

religious side of the Pardon I have nothing to do here—this is not the place; suffice it that it consisted of a procession of relics round the decorated streets by a multitude of ecclesiastics, members of religious orders, and peasants bearing torches, the singing of hymns, the setting fire to heaps of faggots in the largest open space in the town, and a course of prayers and penitential exercises in the parish church. There can be no second word on it, these Bretons were deeply impressed with reverence, were single-minded in their piety, were genuinely in earnest in their forms of worship, and disbursed much money in alms and altar offerings. There was no cant, or rant, or hysteria. It was an extraordinary manifestation of that rare virtue which they set store by in old times under the name of faith. Some of these people had trudged, stick in hand, in their heavy wooden clogs, the night long to pay their orisons at the shrine; some

were fasting; and many, when the day's devotions had been brought to a close, sank exhausted in hall-ways, on stone steps, or on the hard ground under the stars.

As a study of costumes, the Pardon was well worth a visit. These Bretons, with their long dark hair rolling over their shoulders, were picturesque. They wore a very wide-leaved, stiff, semi-globular topped black hat, which was usually ornamented with ribbons, buckles, and silver tassels. Each parish, as in Wales and Jersey, had its uniform. Those from Cornouailles were known by their white trousers, ballooning at the hips, and tied into tight gaiters at the knee, and their yellow-edged vests. A short collarless jacket was universal; this was usually of dark material, embroidered and spangled, but sometimes a white flannel jacket with black velvet border was to be seen.

The Léonard rustics wore a funereal-hued garb

recalling the melancholy ocean, contiguous to which they dwelt, and most were as great on bright conical buttons as the page-boy of farce. The women, set and stoutly-framed, sallow, clumsy of gait, were not of the same order of aerial beings that patter to and fro in the market-places of opera, though they did brighten themselves with gaudy bodices and petticoats tricked out with red and gold. They were thick in the ankles and not flute-like in the throat. Some of the older of the sex might have played the witches in "Macbeth" without much preparation of the make-up description; yet all, I dare affirm, were honest, hard-working folk. The Bretons have a bad name for dirt and drunkenness. It is undeserved, at least, it is exaggerated. The fair was astonishingly similar to Irish gatherings of the class: the same standings for petty finery and sweets, the same noisy Cheap Johns, causing easy laughter by their antiquated jokes, the same

primitive booths. There was a deal of quiet "coorting," but no fighting, and bargains were driven in the diplomatic Celtic style, and a drop of drink indulged in after. The whole tribe of mendicants of the province seemed to have assembled, the halt, the blind, the paralytic, Billy the Bowl and the frostbitten sailor, and poured forth their petitions as in the scene in Falconer's "Peep o' Day" in Drury Lane. Some of these were loathsome to look at. At night most of the young folk and some of the old, formed rings, and with linked hands danced an uncouth dance round and round, backward and forward, pounding the earth with their solid feet, to the squeaking of the biniou or national bagpipes.

One canvas structure in a by-street apart from the bustle of the town caused me much vain guessing. A long tress of hair was hung outside it; the door was open, but a sheet screened the interior from a sort of vestibule. At last I could

contain myself no longer, but pushed aside the screen, and saw a couple of women seated on chairs, and tonsorial artists, who were not Bretons, flourishing shears over their heads. A yell sent me back at the double quick, as it flashed upon me that these peasants were selling the hair which is the glory of womankind elsewhere. It is the custom; the loss of their abundant braids is not remarked, as their head-gear is a close-fitting linen cap; but still they do not like to be caught making the sacrifice. That hair goes to Paris, to go thence Heaven knows where. The raven richness of a ball-room belle never fixes me now that that tent in the Guingamp lane does not rise to my vision. The purchased crop of these Breton girls may glisten next, civilised and socially promoted by pomade, under the coronet of a countess in her own right in a royal drawing-room, or of a Grand Duchess by right of Offenbach in the Court of Gerolstein. These crops do want some cleansing

occasionally; but they are less objectionable than those which are cut off in the convict-prison or the hospital dead-house.

Before I had the excuse to tire of Brittany, a message hurried me to Paris, where matters of deeper moment than folk-lore, provincial manners and customs, or the caprices of dress, were at hand—matters affecting the lives of thousands of God's creatures and that most damnable of contentious inventions, the balance of power.

CHAPTER XI.

France and Germany irritated—*Coups d'Etat* played out—The Zouave's Opinion—Excitement in Paris—Kissing all Round—"Aber-lah!"—A Corpulent Prima Donna—Mr. Bowes makes a Bet with an Artillery Officer—Professor Mortimer's Presentiments—Sheep to the Slaughter—An Editorial Council—Wars no Gain to Newspapers—War Correspondents and War Artists—Lord Wolseley's Error—The Trick of Success—The Writer meets an Accident—Off to Metz.

When I arrived in the careless metropolis of vivacious trifling, it was bubbling with excitements of a more serious kind than usually occupied it. Serious though these were, Paris took them with its accustomed levity. It was summer, the season of sunshine, and everything was treated in a brisk sunshiny spirit. Luxury was at its zenith; the morrow was anticipated without misgiving. Would the Sigmaringen Prince per-

sist in his design of filching the crown of Spain —like the cheek of these hungry Germans!—or would he not? He did not; ha! then, he was afraid. These beer-swilling, sausage-eating sons of the Fatherland had learned that they must not go beyond a certain point—they must not think to Teutonize the Peninsula and shut up the Grand Nation between two walls. They were getting insolent of late at their easy successes over Danes and Austrians. It was high time to teach them a lesson. Why accept this churlish yielding? Let them know once for all that France would not tolerate intermeddling with her concerns—that is, with Spanish concerns. The Chamber should insist that a guarantee would be given that no more pauper German princelings should intrigue to get hold of vacant crowns and fatten on unmonopolised Civil Lists; and the Chamber did insist, and the Duke de Grammont made a vehement speech demanding

that no such course of conduct should be repeated. This was not a conciliatory line of policy; Prussia resented it, put up its back, and vowed that it would not be dictated to. France, I imagine, would have acted similarly, under like circumstances. Negotiations were broken off, the Potsdam ruler snubbed the French Ambassador as Napoléon did the Austrian eleven years before, and war was declared on both sides almost simultaneously.

By both sides it was accepted without murmur of much potency; by Prussia with a cheerful resignation, as the only solution of an ugly problem; by France, let what pretence soever be made now, with gratification. There can be no question that the war with Prussia had been foreseen. There was a bitter animosity to the monarch of that kingdom, since his unexampled successes over Austria, a power which had opposed such a stout resistance to France

and Italy combined in 1859. There was a lively jealousy at the military prestige he had so swiftly acquired. Whether the desire for war was stronger in France or Prussia, it is not for me to say, but that it existed in both lands was undeniable. It was felt that a struggle was inevitable; indecent lampoons on "Le Roi de Prusse"—a by-word for one who takes services without paying for them—were rife in Paris, and if quarrels about the dismantling of Luxemburg and Spanish successions had never arisen, some pretext for a rupture would have presented itself, and, fault of that, would have been invented. That stupid publicist, de Girardin, who had such an inordinate vanity, and such an exaggerated sense of his own abilities and wisdom, had long preached a crusade for the recovery of the Rhine — the natural frontier of France! Those who had practical acquaintance with warfare, like Generals Trochu and Ducrot, saw with

dread the increasing strength and improved organisation of the probable enemy, and sent warnings from the frontier to Paris. The Emperor himself in every likelihood perceived and shrunk from the rocks ahead, but what was he to do? There was accumulating discontent at home; as the Empress wrote to him from Egypt in 1869, "*coups d'état* are not made twice in the same reign." He had no alternative but to set his dynasty on a cast—that of war with the foreigner—and would stand the hazard of the die. Both nations meditated war, Prussia prepared for it; therein lay the difference. The plan of forming a vast reserve of Mobile Guards had never been carried out; it fell through on the death of Marshal Niel, and France, relying on its successes when genius directed its armies, absolutely had the folly to court a conflict, one Minister declaring that he entered on it with a light heart, and another that so perfect were preparations,

that not even a button on a gaiter was wanting.

To say that France was dragged into that war, is utter nonsense. She went into it willingly and with eyes open, and was so confident of the result that she would have rejected proffer of help with indignant scorn. At that time I was an ardent partisan of the French; but from what I saw later and from what I think now, I believe that it was better for civilisation that France was beaten. That she was not beaten fairly and on the merits, none but fools or knaves can maintain. Had Germany been crushed on that occasion, other adventures would have been tried; the French, it is to be feared, would have swollen with pride as of Lucifer, and have played, as they did in the earlier portion of this century, the European bully. They would have been unbearable; and I honestly think all true friends of the really grand nation must rejoice

that they received such a wholesome corrective. So much for politics—the first and only reference to them I permit myself.

The news that the Emperor's voice was for war, was hailed with joy by frivolous Paris; the Bourse, which had been a Capernaum of noisy contradictions, a boiling cauldron of financial intrigue for days, rose to the "physiological moment" of the fever. In the streets there were smiles on flushed faces, and strangers shook hands with each other as if they had been friends of a life-time meeting after a long parting. Soldiers were seized by civilians, hugged and dragged off to the nearest wine-shop to drink to the coming harvest of laurel. One elated nursery-maid ran up to the black Turco on sentry in the garden of the Tuileries and embraced him. Hamet grinned, showed his nacre-white teeth, and took the embrace more than fraternally. Many of the veterans were not carried away by

this delirium. They knew what war was; the noisy *chauvins* only knew it in romances and reviews. A gray-bearded Zouave of the Guard, with the Italian and Mexican medals on his breast, asked me was the news true.

"Yes," I answered, "what do you think of it?"

"Ma foi!" he said seriously; "J'en ai bien peur nous aurons du fil à retordre." (I'm very much afraid we have our work cut out for us.)

Prescient Zouave! But with few exceptions Paris behaved as if she had fallen in for an unexpected legacy. There was a great run upon maps of Germany by the quidnuncs who were preparing to follow the campaign with pins with coloured heads to them, to mark the positions. Annuitants might be witnessed solemnly showing the tracing of bastions with matches on the marble tables of *cafés*. There was midnight revelry; troops of workmen in white blouses (said, truly

or untruly, to be paid by the police) paraded the boulevards, shouting "*à Berlin! à Berlin!*"

"*Aber-lah! aber-lah!* What is that?" demanded a Cockney tourist.

"'Tis a nursery refrain of a French ride-a-cock-horse song when they are trotting to the devil," made reply a German who understood English.

The "Marseillaise," forbidden for years, was again allowed to be chaunted—recommended to be chaunted. The military bands played it by the fountain in the Palais Royal, and hands were clapped and hats thrown high in air. In the theatres at night the performance was interrupted, that the martial hymn, rousing as a battle-trumpet, might be raised in chorus. Faure had to sing it; Capoul had to sing it; they even forced the corpulent prima donna, Marie Sass, to sing it. With the tricolour held in her fat arms, and her opulent shoulders shaking like

blanc-mange, she looked like the Goddess of Victory run to flesh and out of breath with the exertion to keep pace with her disciples.

The appeal to take arms against that horde of slaves, the ferocious soldiers of tyranny, who were throttling women and children in the fields of France, was inconsistent in the mouths of Imperialists, who were yelling out for an immediate advance on the Prussian capital; but Paris was too mad to think of consistency. The madness caught me in the end, and I discovered myself, to my astonishment, shouting "*à Berlin! à Berlin!*" with the best. The enthusiasm of a crowd, like its panic, is very catching—it is in the air.

I honestly believed that the war would be a *promenade militaire*, a walk-over for France. Nor was I the only benevolent neutral who nourished the same illusion. An artillery officer, one of Wolseley's pets, was in Paris, and thought

that the entry into Berlin might almost be made by the 15th of August, the date of the Imperial *Fête.*

"It would not surprise me," said Mr. Bowes, "if we saw German shells flung into Paris before this business is over."

"Ridiculous! I lay you ten to one we don't see that, anyhow," said the scientific officer.

"I seldom bet, but I take you for a sovereign merely to back my foreboding," coolly said Bowes. "I have a profound respect for the people who exchanged gold for iron at the beginning of the century."

Professor Mortimer, although he had confidence in the French, assured me that the conflict would be very tough. He knew the Germans, he said, had lived for years near a big German barrack, and mixed with German officers. Their organisation was perfect, their drill and discipline, and the physique and intelligence of the men, were far and away before those of the French. "And

yet," he added, "such is the latent military genius in this queer race that another Bonaparte may arise and knock all the science of the Fatherland into a cocked hat."

"Will Hanover and the states of the South forget their resentments and join with Prussia?"

"Yes," said Mortimer; "this is the one question that can make them forget all local dissensions. In Germany the Frenchman is the hereditary enemy; Pomeranians and Tyrolese will band together to fight him. If Prussia is successful, the union of Germany will be cemented, and it will be unassailable ever after, as long as it is true to itself."

A regiment of the Line was marching to the Eastern terminus to entrain for the frontier. The street mob was cheering the soldiers to the full of its lungs.

"Sheep led to the slaughter!" remarked a German on the footpath.

He was only laughed at. A few weeks later he would have been rent to pieces for less than that. But even a street mob can be magnanimous when it thinks it is going to have it all its own way.

The editor of the *Standard* came over to Paris in company with the well-known Special Correspondent, Mr. George A. Henty, who had had experience of the Crimea, of the Garibaldian expedition to Sicily, and the Austro-Italian and Abyssinian wars, in order to complete his arrangements for the campaign. Editors, like generals, have to hold their councils. Mr. Bowes naturally was to stay at his important post in the capital, to follow the political movement. I was asked which side I would wish to join, and at once answered the French. I knew the people and their language, and my sympathies were with them. To me was assigned, therefore, to my delight, the duty of following their fortunes in the field. The editor

took me aside, and said: "Don't be too hard on them if they are unlucky." That was the only hint which could be construed into instructions I ever received during my whole career as Special Correspondent, and yet there are people who suppose we go out with a brief, warned to give this or that colouring to what we chronicle. I never would, and I may say, if such an office were expected of me, I would resign my post on the spot, no matter what the pecuniary sacrifice to myself it involved. The function of the Special Correspondent, as I take it, is to detail facts as graphically as he can, not to express bias. It is for others to make their deductions from his facts. His first duty is to be accurate; in short, he is the contemporary historian. When he acts as partisan he is no longer a self-respecting gentleman; he is no better than the horse-jockey who pulls to orders.

There is no greater popular fallacy than to believe that newspapers make an immense profit

out of wars. Of course, I mean the newspapers which detail representatives to the scene of action. The sale of the journal may run up to a very large figure indeed, but it takes the proportion of gain on an extreme number of pennies to cover the price of one telegram. More than a thousand pounds have not uncommonly been paid for messages conveying the first intimation of a British victory in a distant land. It would require, on a moderate computation, an increase in the demand of half-a-million copies of a day's issue to meet the outlay on this solitary item in the day's contents. Yet the outlay must be incurred, if the character of the paper is to be maintained, and it is cheerfully incurred in the cases of half-a-dozen of the greater organs of the press in England and America, such as the *Times*, *Standard*, *Telegraph*, and *Daily News*, a syndicate of provincial papers (and there are some admirably conducted in Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Glasgow, and Dublin), and

the *Herald*, and one or two others in New York. In the race of enterprise, the Continental journals are simply left nowhere. Their directors seem unequal to rising to the conception that such expenditure *must* add to the reputation of their papers, and that as an inevitable corollary the circulation will go up. They pause affrighted if they are asked to dip deeply into their pockets; they want to see an immediate return. People of this timid temperament do not deserve to succeed; they are of a class which prefers piling its sovereigns in a long stocking and hiding it in the thatch to venturing them in speculation—naturally a speculation with a due amount of risk, but with a good prospect of fortune and renown. The money laid out in this way is well laid out; and considering the difficulties under which they labour, those to whom is confided the spending of it earn their wage honestly, and do their

duty ably. Their occupation is very hazardous, if their rewards are generous, and if their chances of receiving praise, which is dear to most men, are great. The War Correspondent, like the poet, is born, not made. He must have his aptitudes, the two first of which are good temper and good digestion; he must be possessed of tact and activity, be able to ride bare-backed and write with a fish-bone, be a good linguist and a light sleeper, have a practical knowledge of soldiering and be content, on occasion, to make a meal off the soles of his boots.

But there are war correspondents, and war correspondents. Julius Cæsar was famous among the ancients, and his "Commentaries" are worth reading. Amongst the moderns the palm of priority must be accorded to Dr. Russell, dean of the faculty. Nick Woods, who has since passed away almost unnoticed, "collared him" —to use a racing phrase—more than once in

the Crimea, and in my judgment wrote the most vigorous account of Inkermann. Then there is George A. Henty, most veracious of chroniclers and hardest of toilers, who also served in that campaign, but not in the ranks of the press militant. He has had a most lengthened and varied experience in many climes, most of them detestable. He is the only gentleman, I believe, entitled to wear the Crimean, Abyssinian, and Ashanti medals. The leading battle-pensman of to-day is undoubtedly—I trust no jealousies will be excited—the gallant, lucky, and resourceful young Cameron of the *Standard*, Cameron of Majuba Hill, of Tel-el-Kebir, and of the Soudan. He has stepped into the shoes of his countryman, Archibald Forbes, the first properly to utilise the telegraph-wire for the transmission of war tidings. It is Polichinello's secret that Forbes' despatches during this Franco-German conflict helped to make the prosperity of the journal he represented—his

and those of the Besieged Resident. His brief message describing the victory of Ulundi is one of the most well-defined bits of word-painting I ever read—condenses information as an egg does meat.

In the artistic department it would be unpardonable not to make honourable mention of that light-hearted pilgrim of the brush, dear old Melton Prior, of the veteran William Simpson, who can take his pencil-jottings imperturbably within the hum of imminent-exploding shell and a measurable distance of the hail of bullets, and of the energetic Frederick Villiers.

These gentlemen eat no idle bread in a campaign, and do not usually recoil from a share in the dangers, fatigues and hardships of combatants. Sometimes they do not live to come home to recount their adventures. Bowlby was massacred in China; Pemberton was shot through the head at Sedan; O'Donovan was speared at Kashgill; Schüver was murdered at Bahr-el-

Gazele; MacGahan died of rapid typhus at Pera, and Leader of the same disease at Phillipopolis; Collins died lingeringly of cold and hunger at the mouth of the Lena—all being at the time in the exercise of their vocation as Special Correspondents.

And yet it is this order which one Colonel Sir Garnet Wolseley, C.B., K.C.M.G., writing at Montreal in 1869, stigmatises as "newly invented curses to armies"—under the rose, I perhaps may agree with him to some extent—and counsels general officers to use as a medium for spreading false news to deceive the enemy—not a nice but a thoroughly legitimate expedient; and finally, most absurdly and unjustly dismisses as "a race of drones, who are an incumbrance, who eat the rations of fighting men and *do no work at all.*"* I am confident the riper judgment

* The *Soldier's Pocket Book*, pp. 82, 86, and 225, Edition of 1871.

of Lord Wolseley of Cairo would not endorse the immature opinion about a most industrious set of gentlemen, expressed by his namesake, the staff-colonel.

That which brings the most grist to the newspaper mill, I fear, is a murder attended with peculiar circumstances of atrocity—such as those in which Müller, Wainwright, Lamson, and Lefroy won their wicked notoriety, a prurient divorce-court trial, or a case of mystery like that of the Claimant to the Tichborne baronetcy and estates. This is pitiful, but it is true.

The Franco-German conflict cost a small fortune to those who had press-agents at the scene of hostilities; but there was a fair return of profit. The countries were near England, and communication with them, postal or otherwise, and travelling therein, was not alarmingly expensive, and literally, all readers turned first to the tidings from the seat of war. But there have been wars

since, which have involved an enormous outlay, such as those in Afghanistan and South Africa, and brought in slender returns except in newspaper glory. It is a mistake to fritter away money in regular droning everyday despatches from the area of interest. Wait until there is something big in the way of fight, and then strain every sinew, scatter every dollar, make a splutter that men will notice and drawing-rooms chatter about. That is the secret of success. Be slightly a showman. I had to spend much money, and endure many rebuffs before I learned it. Given the faculty of writing, that and promptitude—which consists principally in keeping open communications with one's base—are the secrets of success as a War Correspondent. I never was much of a success. My insight into the tricks of the craft came too late.

Preparations for the campaign were soon made. The less one takes with him, the less one has to

lose. It was left to myself to choose the best point to start for, that near which serious operations were most likely to be set on foot. On reflection, I considered Metz to be the probable point from which the earliest great movement would be made, and resolved to go there. I had no authority to follow the army, but neither had anybody else. I was no worse off than others, and trusted to luck to obtain the requisite paper when at headquarters. If the French were fortunate, I knew I should have no difficulty whatever about it.

Before leaving, I called on Montbard to bid him good-bye. Descending from his rooms, I happened to lean against the side of the staircase to allow a lady, who was going up, to pass. That which I took for a wall was actually a door; it gave way, and I was precipitated down a steep descent, and found myself on the hard stone floor of the shop of the Mère Moreau.

The thick-skulled, thick-skinned bruin to whom the place belonged began abusing me as I lay half stunned; but a more kindly bystander lifted me and helped me to a cab. I drove to a bath, calling at an apothecary's on the way to purchase tincture of arnica, and immersed myself at once in a tank of steaming water. That deadened the pain somewhat. I rose and rubbed myself with the arnica to arrest the development of bruises, felt better, and went to dine. I dined heartily, took more wine than I should take to still physical torment, and afterwards fortunately met Mr. Curry, one of the editorial staff of *Galignani's Messenger*, who saw me to the train. On the way there were groups shouting "*À Berlin!*" which, in my then condition of agony and exaltation, drove me nearly out of my senses. I joined in the cry with more heat than I should have done, and the next I recollect is that I was packed with a lot of officers in the

corner of a cushioned compartment, aching, angry, and exhausted, with an irritating sense that somebody had ill-treated me, and that I should exchange shots with him. The feeling wore off, and I sunk into a cramped lethargy. It was a bad beginning of a campaign.

CHAPTER XII.

A Barrack Hotel—A too Intelligent Waiter—Carrying the War into Carthage—Poising a Uniform—A Run for Dear Life—Bazaine and his Nephews—The Phlegm of Metz—Difficulties of Correspondents—A Childish Telegraphic Code—English Officers on the Campaign—The Spy-Mania—My First Arrest—My Second Arrest—The Emperor and Prince Imperial arrive—A Micawberish Army—My Third Arrest, which had no Charm—Under Surveillance—Speculating on Death—Teased by the Orderlies—A Typical Gendarme—General Jarras—Unmerciful Disaster—En Route for Luxemburg—Roundabout Return to Paris.

At Metz the enthusiasm was more repressed than in the capital. The weather was hot, intensely hot, but men's passions were cool. It may have been that the natives, who are undoubtedly German by race, are less flighty and less liable to be carried away by martial ardour. The site of conflict was too close to them to be agreeable,

and they may have had a deeper respect for the valour and resources of their opponents. I drove to the principal inn, the Hôtel de l'Europe—the best, which is the cheapest place in the long run to go to—and secured the last unbespoken room. The proprietor of this establishment, the virtual headquarters of "the Army of the Rhine"—that Rhine which most of those composing it were fated to see first as captives—was a native of Wurtemburg. Many of the waiters were German by birth, and at least one of these struck me as having a bearing and manners above his calling. There were but a few other civilians in the hostelry, Dr. Charles Austin, of the *Times*, among the rest, and I noticed that this waiter was particularly attentive to us, which was a favour to be esteemed, as anybody beneath the rank of general of division got scant courtesy in this barrack hotel. Colonels were thick as blackberries; captains did not count; mere lieutenants were thought no more of than

so many door-mats. There were three marshals of France with their staffs under the roof, Bazaine, Canrobert, and Lebœuf; and some forty generals usually sat down to meals. A spacious saloon had been transformed into an office, and here aides-de-camp were at work all day in their shirt sleeves, filling in forms, conducting correspondence, and carrying on the multifarious processes of the great killing machine. Open documents lay strewn about the tables, and the waiters were constantly summoned to bring cooling drinks. These documents were accessible to the waiters if they had any curiosity to consult them. The waiter I was attracted by struck me as very intelligent, almost intelligent enough to be an Engineer officer. He spoke French admirably, and with less of an accent than the Lorrainers, who turned their "v's" into "f's," and their "c's" into "g's." But his English betrayed him. In my bedroom one morning I said to him, point-blank:

"You are no Frenchman!"

He was startled, and reddened. As I looked at him steadily, he gave a faint smile.

"It is no business of mine. I am a neutral. You are a German, and you learned English in America."

He positively staggered and answered, "It is true."

It was easy to form deductions. No German of the fighting age would have been permitted to remain away from the colours of his local regiment at such a crisis; and if he did venture on a course which deprived him of civil rights, subjected him to penalties, and everlastingly disgraced his family, he would hardly have dared to remain in employment so near the frontier. He may have had naturalisation papers as a citizen of the United States. However, as I before remarked, it was no business of mine. Somebody was shot as a spy during the siege.

I suffered greatly from racking pains and stiffness of the joints, consequent on my fall, and was afraid an advance would be made before I would be in a condition to follow it. The fear was groundless. For days and days the Army of the Rhine dawdled about Metz. The troops were arriving slowly and irregularly; there was a palpable feebleness of organisation; regiments lay for hours at the railway terminus awaiting orders; the supply of rolling stock was grossly inadequate to quick mobilisation; golden minutes were squandered, and, meanwhile, the Germans were steadily and systematically massing at the other side of the border. There was still opportunity, however, of making an offensive movement and "carrying the war into Carthage." That the French counted on taking the aggressive is incontrovertible. The maps furnished from the War Ministry at Paris embraced but little of France and a great deal of Germany; and a young Posener, who was

attached to Bourbaki as interpreter, assured me that billets and requisitions for forage in German had been printed in hundreds of thousands. When this gallant lad, who possessed an intense hatred of Prussia, tried on his lieutenant's uniform, and asked me how it became him, I answered: "Admirably; but it wants something in your lapel to balance that single epaulette."

"Right," he exclaimed rapturously, "and I shall have it before the end of the war."

He did earn the rosette of the Legion of Honour I subsequently learned, having been successful in taking a message from Bazaine out of the sorely beleaguered stronghold. He had a tooth drawn and an artificial tooth inserted in its place. This was hollow, and into the gap was stuffed a quill with a despatch in cipher reduced by photography to a microscopic minuteness. Disguised in squalid, tattered habiliments, he was taken to the foreposts one misty night,

and ran towards the Germans shrieking in their language for help. The French sentries fired on him with blank. The Germans took him prisoner; he was conducted before some high officials, told a piteous tale of having been caught in Metz—he had no means to leave it, being very poor, he had lost his all, he was buffeted and threatened with death, and he had determined to make one bold venture for the dear life. He was believed, was well treated, and was let go his way rejoicing.

So ignorant were the French officers of geography, that I heard one of them speak of the Forest of Haguenau as if it were the Black Forest. Instead of studying the lie of the land where they might be called on in a few days to operate, some of them—those who had served in Algeria judging from the tanned faces—used to sit outside in the garden-front of the Hôtel de l'Europe smoking cigars, drinking absinthe, and

indulging in idle chatter. The only two gentlemen I saw who showed any desire to master the topography of the district where the earliest engagements might take place were a couple of stripling subalterns, one of artillery, the other of foot-chasseurs, on Bazaine's staff. They were his nephews, and both spoke English. The Marshal himself, a sturdy, brusque, weather-beaten veteran of six-and-fifty years, with a large round head crowned with closely-shorn white hair, ruddy complexion and lively eyes, was prompt and busy. He looked the type of a non-commissioned officer. A cloud has overshadowed him since; but then he was the idol of the soldiers, chiefly because he had risen from the ranks, having literally found the bâton in his knapsack, and they had more faith in his abilities than in those of any of his compeers —faith built on his career in Africa, Spain, the Crimea, and Mexico. There were consultations and dinners, and visits of inspection, and bowing

and scraping, and riot *sub rosâ* in card-playing and vulgar debauchery by officers who had received their allowance at entering on campaign, and harrying changes of quarters and indecision, and much-ado-about-nothing, and the golden minutes continued to be squandered. The Army of the Rhine was as undecided as Mr. Micawber.

We were all waiting for somebody, and it transpired, as I had anticipated, that Metz was to be the grand centre of direction for the coming struggle. That profound military genius, His Imperial Majesty, Napoléon III., was about to take the chief command in person. The Messinois are a heavy folk; they are not given to the wild expansions of Paris; they were not moved by the apparition of multitudinous strange uniforms, for Metz is a garrison town. They simply rose to a slight exhibition of technical curiosity when the Imperial Guard arrived with its tall grenadiers, its sprightly voltigeurs and riflemen, its free-

and-easy Zouaves—above all the Zouaves, mostly *enfants de Paris*, who took life with such a spirit of devil-may-care—and the gorgeously caparisoned and attired and well-mounted cuirassiers, dragoons, lancers, chasseurs, carbineers, and guides. This pampered Guard did no good to the army at large. Its existence fermented jealousy; and, furthermore, the picked and seasoned men drafted into it robbed the Line of much of its solidity and cohesion. The ordinary French infantryman, the *piou-piou*, is stunted but strong, sober, docile and patient. It was to be noticed as he trudged into Metz, that he was over-burdened, and did not handle his rifle as one who understood and was on good terms with his splendid weapon. He was dazed and weary, but cheerful. He lumbered along instead of stepping out neatly, like his British colleague (before short service was introduced). The Messinois were not demonstrative; they watched

the arriving host, but did not expend much lung-power in its welcome; they were not hospitable; indeed, they were of the sutler mind, and their principal object seemed to be to turn a penny out of the occasion. It was dull this waiting for big events. We scanned the vivandières, hard beldames with corrugated cheeks; we gazed on the ominous Red Cross of Geneva on waggons; we listened to the Engineer band on the dusty esplanade; we speculated on the dispositions of the phalanx of orderlies on the terrace of the Hôtel de l'Europe; we looked at the quick Moselle; we surveyed from a distance the camps (which were forbidden to civilians); we laughed at the engravings of the Emperor in action, with a fiery shell bursting under his charger's hind-quarters, and felt, like the army, excessively Micawberish.

The correspondents began arriving by battalions; Frenchmen were in the majority, but

their fitness for the task may be divined from the fact that one of them wrote a charmingly poetic description of the cathedral. This to feed a public hungering for mighty battles and the clash of arms! The café we patronised was actually built into a side wall of the fane, which may excuse the playfulness of M. Jules Claretie. The most hard-working searcher after news in the band was a Pole who used to tramp to the extreme outposts, where a feeble spattering of shots was always going on, and back again, and concoct bulletins about these "affairs;" but this was not the war. That unfortunate pushing man must have had a wretched salary. There was nothing to be done, no facilities were given to Press representatives: they were not recognised, and were only waiting the chance of one success to make appeal to the authorities for safe-conducts to the front.

Every message sent by telegraph had to be

specially authorised, and this authorisation could only be obtained when the message had been translated, and when any items of genuine information it contained had been cut out. This precaution was of the ostrich kind, seeing that letters, which were not arrested *en route*, were only thirty-six hours in arrear of the telegrams, and that if there were anything really important to communicate, one had only to cross the frontier to Belgium and wire thence with full licence. At Luxemburg, they were afraid to pass messages connected with war movements lest they should be thought to lend themselves to a breach of neutrality, and incur the hostility of their powerful neighbours. No cipher was tolerated. One acute correspondent who thought he had managed to evade this regulation nearly got himself into a serious scrape. His plan was simple to the verge of the childish. A nephew of his named William was supposed to be sick, his uncle

was coming to visit him, the prospects of recovery for the boy varied; now he thought he could take a walk, now he had a relapse, and so on to the end. The telegraph officials grew suspicious at the frequency of these costly despatches of affection and asked to be shown this ailing nephew. It was not easy to accede to the request; William was the King of Prussia, his uncle the Emperor Napoléon.

Mr. Sala, who was clearly out of his element, two Mayhews, two Vizetellys, Holt White, "Azamat Batuk," N. A. Woods, General Duff (Andrew Halliday's brother), and a crowd *sine nomine*, with two war artists of European fame, Mr. Sydney Hall, of the *Graphic*, and Mr. William Simpson, of the *Illustrated London News*, turned up in quick succession. One man suggested that we should hire a press omnibus, and have painted on it "*À Berlin, par l'Avenue de la Victoire*," and the suggestion impressed no-

body as particularly premature or absurd. With an exception, we were all seized with the prevalent French malady, we were counting our chickens before they were hatched; it was in the atmosphere. The exception was Holt White, who had travelled to Metz by way of Mayence and Treves, and had witnessed the Prussian preparations. But his opinion, I fear, was stimulated by the chance it gave him of using the classic quotation: *Ave, Imperator, morituri te salutant,* as applicable to the Imperial Guard defiling before the most modern of the Cæsars. Woods, who buried himself in his room before a huge melon and a large map of Germany, told me in strict confidence one morning where the first decisive fight would come off. He pointed to a valley under the walls of Mayence!

But Captain Pen can hardly be blamed for his error when experienced military men were equally sanguine. I dined with Captain (now

Colonel) Brackenbury, R.A., and Captain (now Colonel also) Nolan, of the same corps, he whose range-finder is adopted in the service, at the Hôtel de l'Europe, and they had come to the conclusion that there would be a stiffer tussle than we expected, but that France would indubitably win. They had just completed a tour of the fortresses of Thionville, Bitche, Toul, and Strasburg, and as they were both possessed of extensive professional knowledge, their judgment carried weight with us. They were very anxious to accompany the French in the field, but the order from Her Majesty, prohibiting officers to take part on either side, came as a grievous disappointment.

To help us to while away the tedium of suspense, the spy-mania set in. Mr. Simpson was taken into custody for having dared to open his note-book and pencil a sketch of the Prefecture. A pair of English tourists were locked up

as suspicious characters because they had asked some stupid questions, in the "Stratford-atte-Bowe" tongue, as to the position of the troops and prospects of the campaign from a full private. Other compatriots were haled off because they had foolishly entered into conversation in German with some Alsatians of the Guard in a wine-shop. I was felicitating myself that I had escaped these compliments, but my turn came next, and was the most serious of any. Disheartened at the attempt to make blood out of stones, I resolved to visit one of the camps in the Ban Saint Martin, and ascertain how the troops fared and how they felt. I was conducted to their tent by a couple of sub-officers of chasseurs, and was sharing a meal with them on the ground, and had entered into a lively conversation, when the adjutant of the battalion appeared, and summoned me to the commandant's quarters. Everything was innocent and above-board. I explained who and what I was, expressed

for France the sympathies I really felt, and exhibited my passport. I oppressed them with courtesy, treated them in the effusive French style, and ended by inviting the commandant to dine with me at the Hôtel de l'Europe. He was naturally a polite man, and being well bred, asked me to take a glass of wine. He was sorry he could not do the honours, but unless I was armed with a pass from head-quarters he could not show me over the camp, and ultimately I was respectfully escorted outside the lines. I bowed at parting with my companion, and felt internally happy at having secured the material of a useful letter, not unfriendly to my hosts or their cause. But I was "shadowed" ever afterwards. To wear glasses, be guilty of a fair beard, and speak French which was foreign in its accent, albeit purer and not more foreign than the French of Lorraine, was proof that one ought to have been a German. The Zouaves of Paris soon originated

the *scie* of imitating the local patois, and had constant jokes at the expense of the unconscious burghers. "Que foulez-fous?"

One night that I had been detained rather late listening to a Zouave on leave with some comrades, singing selections from an opera in a sweet tenor voice on the banks of the Moselle, I met two Linesmen on the street and imprudently asked them if I was on the right road to the hotel. They were half-tipsy and immediately seized me by both arms and dragged me off to the main-guard. A boyish sub-lieutenant of chasseurs was in charge of the post, and I was forthwith packed off to the lock-up, and thrust into a filthy black hole. If I dared to be as plain-spoken as Zola, I could make the reader unpleasant by an inventory of the furniture of that den. The only occupant was a snoring wretch, on a stone seat against the wall. I sat down beside him, and in about half-an-hour, a big noisy brute, yelling imprecations

on the Germans, was shoved in along with me. By the light held behind him, I could see that he was very powerful and very drunk. He staggered over towards me, not perceiving me, and I stood on the seat and met him with a terrible kick on the forehead, which sent him sprawling and sick. As soon as he recovered himself, he groped towards the sleeper, and began pummelling him. Explanations ensued, and it came out that they were bosom-friends, and had been carousing together in the earlier part of the night. It was mutually agreed that the sleeper had come in violent contact with his chum in the excitement of a bad dream. I kept quietly in a corner, and it never for a moment entered into their muddled brains, that there was a third person in the cell. Gradually, both fell asleep. After some two hours the door was opened again, and an official, a police-commissary, who had dined well, entered. As a lantern

flooded the noisome den, the revellers awoke, and one brute, conspicuous by a flush and a bump on his forehead, stared at me with a vicious surprise. The commissary, who was good-natured, called me out, and I calmly and civilly told him how I had been outraged but that I forgave my captors—it was only patriotism on their part; what vexed me to the soul was that I should be taken for a Prussian.

"Have you any papers?"

"Yes; my passport."

I could not find it; and then I recollected that I had left it in the outside pocket of a top-coat, and that was hanging on a peg in the hall of the hotel and might have been stolen! I said so; but added that I had letters and friends who could guarantee my straightforwardness.

"Where are you stopping?"

"At the Hôtel de l'Europe."

"Ah! with the Marshals. Pardon, monsieur, I will accompany you so far."

The commissary's manner towards me became almost deferential—this is the advantage of stopping at the best inn—and he walked with me home. The top-coat was in the passage, and the passport in the pocket untouched. I got to bed thankfully, with my passport under my head and an impression on my sensorium that Special Corresponding among strangers is not all cakes and ale. It is astonishing what small prestige connection with a great London paper carries in a remote fortress in war time. There was "Azamat Batuk," for instance, and he was nervous lest his presence might cause a commotion. He warned me to keep it dark, and I did; but the precaution was unnecessary. The public of Metz seemed to have no knowledge of him, or to have misdirected the homage of their curiosity towards Emperors and Marshals, and such like empty individualities.

Worn and sallow and stooped, with spiritless eyes, Napoleon III. appeared as he drove slowly through the streets of Metz in an open carriage, his son of fourteen years old beside him. The boy, who was in a brand-new lieutenant's uniform, was smiling and boyishly gladsome, and royally gracious; the father, who was in uniform too, lifted his képi with its myriad gold bands, and was gracious; but oh! so sad, a veritable Sick Man—sick of mind and body.

On the 28th of July he issued a proclamation to the army, at whose head he placed himself, to "defend the honour and soil of France" (by invading Germany), calling on the soldiers to do their duty, and the God of Hosts would be with them. King William replied with his proclamation, stating that they had to defend their threatened Fatherland, their honour, and their hearths, and concluding with the promise: "The Lord God will be with our just cause." How

cock-sure both were of the designs of Providence! How positive pigmies of earth can be of the intentions of the Most High! And yet it may be that the Almighty who tolerates blood-shedding does not approve it, much less join in a slogan. When Germany was triumphant she sang thanksgivings in Versailles. Had the French been triumphant an official *Te Deum* would have been celebrated in Berlin. And yet—but the thought of this profanity is revolting.

We soon had something more interesting to discuss than the sleekness of Arab horses—which horse is much of a fraud—and the length of sappers' beards; there were a few petty skirmishes on the frontier, in which the French were always reported to have the upper hand, and one day a couple of Baden officers were brought in prisoners; two fine-looking men, I saw them sitting in a corridor of the hotel in custody. The attempt to pump them was vain; they were treated chival-

rously, and dined that night at the table with the Marshals. This capture soothed Cerberus for a while, and encouraged the Army of the Rhine in its procrastination.

On the 2nd of August the Emperor and the little boy left to superintend an advance in force on the German territory, that which will be known to history as the comedy of Saarbrücken. I have reason to remember the day. A busybody of a colleague, thinking to ingratiate himself with headquarters, and obtain favours denied to others, hinted to the Marquis de Saint-Sauveur, former Colonel of the Guard Gendarmes and then Provost-Marshal, that I was dangerously familiar with the order of battle of the army. At breakfast that morning in a hotel opposite the Hôtel de l'Europe I expressed myself rather freely to an English artist that the French were letting their opportunity slip, that they were unprepared, and that the boasted Imperial Guard, according to my

computation, were not 40,000 strong, but 22,000 at most. That was their precise number. An officer who had overheard me understood English and left the table. Presently a gendarme appeared and asked me for my papers. I showed him my passport. Of course he did not understand it, and said I would have to accompany him over the way to have it examined. He vouchsafed to let me pay for my breakfast, but not to protract it.

"I am a prisoner then?" I asked.

He nodded, and we went across to the hotel where he sent up my passport and allowed me to sit at the door among a group of orderlies.

I asked might I have a cup of coffee.

"No," sternly answered the officer of the law.

I shrugged my shoulders and tried him again, asking him might I have a cigar.

I suppose he was a smoker, for he assented, and I was soon pulling away at a Manilla.

"Strange," I remarked, after a pause, "that I may have a cigar and no coffee. I am always accustomed to have a cup of coffee after meals; it is a habit I acquired in this beautiful France. Coffee is healthful; and some fools of doctors pretend that smoking is deleterious."

The orderlies laughed.

"Have the coffee and be hanged to you," said the gendarme, and I thanked him and ordered coffees all round. He even unbent so far as to allow me to have a nip of brandy with it.

Gradually I had edged my chair away from the gendarme, until to an unwary observer, it seemed as if I were merely taking mine ease outside mine inn, and was not a prisoner of State under surveillance. A colonel of the Mobile Guard, a local nobleman, whose acquaintance I had made, approached, saluted me, chatted a few moments, and passed on.

The gendarme came closer to me. There was

more respect in his demeanour; but he evidently thought me a very treacherous and truculent individual since I had been laying my snares for men of rank.

"Brigadier, vous avez raison," I hummed from a chanson of Gustave Nadaud, which is not very acceptable to the police force. The orderlies laughed; in France as in England, the police are not beloved of the soldiers; my custodian wriggled uneasily in his chair.

A gentleman, in civilian's clothes, came up to me, and said in English:

"You are a correspondent."

"Yes. Pray who and what are you?"

"Oh! I am a friend. My name is the Count de la Chapelle. What paper do you represent?"

"The *Standard*."

"Where are your credentials?"

"I have none. Correspondents do not carry their characters about them like butlers in quest

of situations. Plenty of people here know me. There is a telegraph to England in any case."

"Do you know so-and-so of the *Standard?*" (mentioning sundry members of its staff.)

"I know them all."

"The *Standard,* I am sure, is friendly to us. This must be seen into," and he entered the hotel.

The Count de la Chapelle, I ascertained months afterwards, was a species of confidential secretary in the Emperor's Cabinet, and was actually under a half-promise to write letters to the *Standard* himself, on the progress of the campaign.

Next the landlady approached, touched me on the elbow and whispered that two gentlemen, who were sitting in a corner of the terrace, had sent her to ask me did I want any money. These were Messrs. Sala and Mayhew.

"You might have answered them for yourself. Have you not a bank-note of mine for a thousand francs in your drawer?"

It began to dawn upon me that there must be some grave charge against me.

"I wonder what I am kept here for," I muttered.

"Don't be uneasy," said a facetious orderly, "you'll know before you are shot!"

Shot! Most certainly; if I were taken for a spy, I might be shot, if the leaders of this tribe were as frenzied idiots as the common people. Shot at the opening of a campaign which bade fair to be so interesting too, and so ripe in occasions for writing. And as a spy! Nonsense, the thing was too ridiculous. Was not England near? One humble life would not count much, it was true, when we were on the eve of hecatombs of slaughter. But that British passport, was it to be affronted? Would France

dare to sanction such a criminal, such a contemptible blunder? What did the orderly know? I was a fool. I turned towards where my colleagues were sitting. Their faces were serious to gloominess.

A trooper galloped up in a state of excitement, and handed a despatch to an orderly. A short colloquy ensued, and as the orderly entered he slipped some word to his fellows. Immediately there was a murmur of talk, and a soldier jerked over towards me:

"You ought to be with your countrymen, instead of here."

And I could guess that the French and Prussians were engaged. I sincerely prayed for the success of the French, for I knew only too well what unreasonable acts a defeated side permits itself to be led into.

With ears preternaturally quickened, I caught a remark in the hall behind me.

"The Marquis de Saint-Sauveur says he ought to be shot if he is not half an idiot."

There was one consolation, I would be shot not hanged. To-morrow morning, or to-night perhaps. Better be shot than strung up by the neck anyhow. Shall I be funky at the final moment? That was my sole pre-occupation. I will ask leave to have my eyes unbandaged, and will give the word myself, to show my scorn for them and their sentence. But shall I have the fortitude? My lips were getting dry. The sun was flaming, and the temperature was at its hottest. Warm work fighting to-day. I suppose they will allow me to have what I choose before I am marched off. Doomed men always get that grace. Who will have the reversion of my money? I thought it was a pity to leave so much behind; and then it struck me that I would dose myself with liquor, if I were only let, to screw my courage to the sticking-place before the

word was given, that is if I had not the pluck to give the word myself. For two torturing hours or more that I sat there, avoided by all as a leper, thoughts such as these ran through my brain. Count de la Chapelle passed again, but only shook his head. Then a second trooper with a despatch arrived; there was joy in his face. Another colloquy at the door, and an orderly cried out with a mocking jeer:

"Ha, ha! my lad, your friends have begun badly. They have got a deuced fine licking."

"What," I exclaimed, "have the French been beaten?"

"No, but your friends the Prussians."

"They are no friends of mine. I am delighted they have been beaten, and would drink to their success if I had any liquor."

I *was* delighted, and I suppose I looked it, for my chances of escape had gone up considerably with the tidings.

"Il n'a pas froid aux yeux, l'animal" (the dog ain't in the least frightened) said an orderly.

Count de la Chapelle re-entered, and in crossing told the gendarme to hold himself ready to bring me before the Staff. To my inquiry, might I make myself presentable, he assented, and commended it as a good thought. The gendarme followed me to my bedroom, where I washed. "Touch no documents," said the gendarme as I opened my valise; I satisfied him that I was only looking for a necktie and then, with a beseeching air, I prayed that he might grant me the favour of slaking my thirst —it was perhaps the last time. He acquiesced, but I was to take care and not be long about it. I rung, and ordered from my German-American waiter, who regarded me with commiserating sympathy, a bottle of the best champagne in the cellar. The gendarme helped

me to drink that generous vintage to the prosperity of the French arms; but it had no more effect on me than so much spring water.

Shortly after I was conducted to the room of General Jarras, Deputy Chief of the Staff, a nice, gentle, elderly little officer, with all the suavity of the old school.

"Cet individu, cet espion," began my gendarme who had preceded me, the same magnificent creature who had condescended to drink my wine.

"Silence," said the General, with a wave of his hand, "neither word is proper in your mouth. You can leave the room."

I am not spiteful, but somehow I did not feel that I had any pity to spare for that snubbed gendarme.

The General drew me towards the embrasure of a window, and said the Emperor had been gracious enough to give command for my im-

mediate release, and it was his agreeable privilege to hand me back my passport.

"We are satisfied that you are all right; and we have enemies enough without injuring the subjects of our good ally."

I thanked him, and added: "I suppose I may remain at headquarters?"

"That is for your own judgment to settle."

"Then most certainly I shall remain; but, General, may I crave as a favour that you would give me a few lines certifying that I am no enemy. There is no fear when I meet superior officers like you, but a stranger runs unpleasant risks of more than molestation from the patriotic but suspicious rabble."

The General must have been a thought-reader. He smiled as he said:

"My dear monsieur, I am desolated that I cannot oblige you. If you got those lines, you would be off to the front, and show them as

authorisation, and then there would be an outcry that we had granted to a foreigner what we had refused to French journalists. We shall see later on; meantime, be grateful, and take your chance with the rest."

Then he asked me how I had come to know the strength of the Imperial Guard, and I candidly told him, compromising nobody. The conversation turned on the forthcoming campaign, and it came out that I had served under a former commander and fast friend of his. We exchanged views; he did not speak over-confidently, and we shook hands at the door on the best of terms.

On coming down to the hall, I discovered my luggage ready packed, and my busybody colleague, who had caused me most of my troubles, by less pardonable indiscretion than mine, standing beside it.

"Everything is ready," he said. "I have seen

that all preparations are made to save you delay. A train is due."

"I want no train," I said.

"What do you mean? Are you not going to the frontier?"

"Not if I know it. My place is here. With MacMahon, *j'y suis, j'y reste.* However, it is as well; I shall leave this caravanserai."

He could not believe his ears. No doubt, it would have pleased him to have a rival out of the way. I paid my bill, quietly went to the house where the officer interpreter was stopping, obtained a share of his room, and told them to fetch my belongings from the Hôtel de l'Europe. I next proceeded to dine in the identical *salle-à-manger* where I was arrested in the morning. My English colleagues were there, and were heartily glad to have me amongst them. They had got me out by their influence, and they were signing a profound acknowledgment to the Emperor—a peg upon which to hang

a request for passes—and asked me to add my signature to it. I declined, not feeling honestly in the mood of gratitude. I did not care to offend these good-natured gentlemen by telling them that I attributed my liberation to the interference of the Count de la Chapelle, and the happy temper, after the day's events at Saarbrücken, of the Emperor, who appeared to be the most sensible man at headquarters.

Keeping to myself as much as possible, I awaited what was certain to turn up, conscious that the first genuine success which should gild the French side would make the pathway of the war correspondents attached to it smooth. Otherwise they would have, unprotected as they were, a bad time of it, and no facilities for sending off letters. On the fourth day, the 6th of August, my friend came hurriedly into the room, and informed me that, from what he could learn and guess there was something very unfortunate

going on at the front; there was heavy fighting towards Saarbrücken, and the French, he feared, were having the worst of it, as there was much confusion at headquarters, and he had received orders to hurry at once to Saint Avold, and the upshot of it would be, making every calculation, that the Germans were advancing and would soon block up all the roads to Metz. Reinforcements had been called for. The Army of the Rhine had waited too long. With communications interrupted, I could render my paper no service; I made up my mind immediately to leave by the next train for Luxemburg while the railway was yet open, and there try and find out some definite news of the battle.

The railway was open but encumbered. Hours and hours I had to wait until it started next morning, Metz being blissfully ignorant of the disaster which had happened at its elbow; and at last we slowly moved out of the terminus. In

the carriage with me were a surgeon-major going to Thionville, and the Bishop of Luxemburg on his journey back from the regulation visit to Rome. The doctor was indignant at the mismanagement he had observed so far, but had great faith in the hardy, cheerful *'piou-piou*, who was worth all their coddled Imperial Guard, and was treated like a pack-horse. Poor man! he had not the most remote notion that so many of his favourites lay dead, wounded, and prisoners in the three most woful mishaps to French arms of Weissenburg, Wörth, and Forbach, even as he spoke. The ecclesiastic was a man of peace, and bemoaned that nations should fight. All the way he impressed on me, as if I had the influence required, to remind England that the neutrality of Luxemburg should be sacred. They were harmless, inoffensive folk, wished ill to nobody, and only wanted to be let alone.

When I saw the grand army of the Grand Duchy, it did not strike me that they deserved excessive credit for refusing to mix in the strife. They were competent only to enter on hostilities with the Principality of Monaco or the Republic of San Marino; and these were, fortunately, too distant for ambitious emulations to stir them up. In the dismantled, rock-hewn fortress, nothing but vaguest surmise had floated in as to the scenes which had been enacted near at hand. There was a detachment of the army of correspondents in the principal hotel; but all they knew was that Luxemburg meant to make formal protest against any occupation of its territory. Two men and a corporal were ready to march to the railway-station and go through the solemn pretence of opposing any entry by Frenchman or German. The feeling of the burghers was unmistakably partial to the French. This was naturally accounted for; a Prussian garrison had held the

place three years previously, and the military sect in North Germany has not the knack of making itself acceptable to the trader. There was nothing to be done at Metz—the whole bevy of pensmen had to clear out of it without hearing a shot fired—nothing at Luxemburg; Germany was not in my sailing directions, so I resolved to get back to France by another route. Taking the rail to Brussels, which was in as vexed a ferment over its threatened neutrality as the good bishop of the Grand Duchy, and was noisily declaring undying friendship for England, I started thence to Paris, by way of Valenciennes, and reached the capital to be greeted with the news of the downfall of the minister who had entered on the war with a light heart, the convocation of the long-despised National Guards, the branding of the generals who had been beaten on the frontiers, as "lions leading asses," and the nomination of a court favourite of the

ripe age of seventy-four, the Count of Palikao, to the Presidency of a Ministry of National Defence.

The Imperial *Fête* was to have been held in the Prussian capital on the 15th of August, and Paris was already making preparations for a siege by the Germans on the 10th. Of the jaunty soldiers who had promised themselves a trip to Berlin, some, indeed, had arrived there, even more expeditiously than they expected—but as prisoners of war!

CHAPTER XIII.

A Debauch of Rumour—Paris in a Fever-fit—Exodus and Immigration — An Easy-going Austrian — Radical Hopes — The Woful News — A Forlorn Troop of Gendarmes—How the Bridge was *not* held—Birth of the Third Republic—Flight of the Empress—Down with Imperial Emblems—*Citizen* replaces Monsieur—Henry Labouchere—The Mid-air Post—My Reported Loss in a Balloon — The Maritime Department of South Cork—A Hot Housekeeper—Miseries of the Siege—Wit and Chivalry leave with Luck—Pictorial and Printed Infamies—The Writer says the Word that must be.

PARIS was a different Paris from the city I had left a few weeks before. The populace is fickle the wide world over, but this populace, which is quick and intelligent beyond the average, is phenomenal in its fickleness. To the overweening confidence of July had succeeded an unreasoning dread, not far removed from panic. MacMahon had an army in the

field, but the faith in MacMahon was shaky, and those nonsensical Prussians began to be spoken of with hatred and respect. They were more formidable than France had been duped into believing; the perfidious wretches had most unfairly been adding to their strength while the grand nation, lulled into security, had been magnanimously letting things run their course. It was disgraceful, this deep cunning on their part. But it was all the fault of that clique of favourites who pressed three deep on the steps of the Tuileries. The star of Napoléon was in its declination. It appeared that these Uhlans were famous fellows, ubiquitous, dare-devil, but ruthless brutes and barbarians. Their notion of honourable war was rape and rapine and cold-blooded murder. Uhlan was Bogey. He decked his spear-point with babies. Then those trickish curs of South Germans, blind to their own interests, had thrown in their lot with the Prussians; but,

trickish curs though they were, they swelled the aggregate of an army, and they had fought because the Prussians, their masters, had taken care to put them in the foremost rank and make them fight. To be suspected of Prussianism then was to incur the hazard of the fate of Ravaillac from wild men, not whipped horses. The whole country had been honeycombed with secret agents of this underhand, intriguing Prussia; the waiter who handed you your bock was really spying out the nakedness of the land; the raddled Rhenish strumpet in Mabille was in the pay of Potsdam. The plans of this war had been laid with dark lanterns and slippered feet. Bismarck was own cousin to Mephistopheles. The Emperor, pshaw! the Empire was will-o'-the-wisp, and France, which had followed it, was to the arm-pits in a quagmire. France, assuredly, was in a quagmire. The name of the slough was Despond. Thus ran the talk on the boulevards, in the

Bourse, in the cafés; the theatres were forsaken for the comedy in the streets, where there was no interruption to the *tohu-bohu* and the *brouhaha* —to use the expressive Parisian words—and all the time the underlying dissipation of "evil-hearted Paris" was as viciously active as if there were no handwriting on the wall. By turns the gossips cursed everything; they even spoke ill of the mitrailleuse—the mitrailleuse which once had been worshipped like the Holy Guillotine. Incredible! It was scoffed at as a broken reed.

Paris was in a fever; there were chills and hot fits; now there was a shivering as when one says, "Somebody is walking over my grave," and anon a paroxysm of arrogant bluster, as some cruel lie, telling of French victory, was spread. But gradually the stern reality, tangible as a wall, was shaping itself out, and the Parisians felt that it would have to be faced. The Germans were in France; Bazaine was hemmed in and worse than

useless. Unless MacMahon could bar their way, the Germans would soon be under the walls of the capital; for that, as the merest tyro in military affairs knew, must be their objective point. The newly-raised Mobile Guards of the Paris district were recalled from Chalons, and those of the unoccupied provinces were summoned in all haste. Orders were given to put the fortifications in a state for work; heavy guns were mounted *en barbette* in the ring of bastions; the trees in the line of the glacis were cut down, and the houses knocked down; sturdy marines and brown sailors, with the brine on their matted beards—best of fighting material these—were brought up from Cherbourg and marched off to man the outlying forts; ay, even the decrepit legions of thick-girthed pompiers from Rouen, Amiens, and the suburbs, ludicrous warriors of pasteboard, were brought in to aid in the defence. Then, as in mediæval days, when an incursion was feared from some raiding troopers,

the farmers, with their stores and cattle, came rushing in to the shelter of the stronghold. But the exodus outnumbered the immigration. The wealthy and the weak-kneed fled, foreigners who could afford it left too, and the *bona-robas* who flourished on the corruptions of the Imperial city sought other victims to prey upon, where luxury was not disturbed by the rude thunder of ordnance. Some foreigners chose to stay. I saw one young Austrian of an aristocratic family, who had wasted many a bright twenty-franc piece on bets, bouquets, and "fine little suppers," seated outside a café on the boulevard.

"What!" I exclaimed, "not gone yet?"

"No, nor am I going. I have enjoyed myself very agreeably in Paris; I have fared well, it is the least I may pay the waiter."

Later on I met a politician of advanced principles; his was the one radiant face in the almost universal gloom.

"Is there any good news?" I asked. "Why so glad?"

"Yes, there is good news; the war is good news. If we beat the Prussians, as we do not seem at all likely to do now, it will be an advantage for France; if we are beaten by them, we are relieved of the Empire. In either event we are the gainers. That is why I am glad."

That optimist had not long to wait for the realisation of one of his hopes. On the night of September 3rd, a vague rumour that dire misfortune had befallen the only army in the field — for Bazaine, it could no longer be gainsayed, was penned up—filtered through the public in that unaccountable way in which evil tidings, like a leaking drain, saturates the soil. On the morning of the 4th, a Sunday of enlivening, exhilarating sunshine, when the Elysian Fields and the Wood of Boulogne were at the height of their autumnal beauty, the grim truth was blurted

out. The capitulation of Sedan had been signed. The army had passed under the Caudine Forks. France was no longer the arbitress of Europe. The Emperor was a prisoner; MacMahon was wounded; all was lost! ay, even to honour, as some could not conceal from themselves. Whoso thought that the tidings would have stunned Paris knew it not. If a stranger were to have dropped into the city he would surely have imagined that this *dies nefastus* was anniversary of jubilee.

Again I met my acquaintance of advanced principles. He was still radiant.

"The war is virtually over," I said. "The truest patriot now is he who will secure the best terms for the country."

"On the contrary," he answered, "the war but begins. Germany has beaten Louis Napoléon, it has yet to conquer France. You will see history before nightfall."

We did; we assisted at the birth of the Third Republic. As I walked towards the Place de la Concorde after breakfast, a troop of mounted gendarmes, some eighty men, was drawn up in single line, under the command of an officer with a *pince-nez*, across the entrance by the bridge which leads to the Corps Législatif. There were knots of excited people, many of them in the uniform of the National Guard, scattered over the broad space with its statues and fountains, and I learned that an extraordinary meeting of the Chamber had been called to discuss the crisis. I turned back and entered the Place du Carrousel from the Rue de Rivoli. It was empty, but in the Court of Honour could be seen voltigeurs of the Imperial Guard—men of the skeleton depôt—on sentry, and others pacing in conversation up and down the flagstones beside their stacked rifles. A half-battery of field artillery was in position.

The Tricolour was floating over the palace—a token that the Empress was in the Tuileries. I retraced my steps towards the Place de la Concorde, and at the intersection of the Rue de l'Echelle a procession of noisy hobbledehoys with a red flag flaunting in the van came bursting down from the boulevards. It was the advance guard of Belleville; shops were hurriedly shut. There were shouts of "Vive la France," but shouts louder and more frequent of "Vive la République." The Place de la Concorde was more crowded than before, and some of the people had approached the line of mounted gendarmes and began talking to the horsemen in a friendly fashion, saying the Empire was at an end, that the only thought of Frenchmen now should be France, and that soldiers instead of trying to overawe civilians should reserve their swords for the national enemy. The gendarmes answered curtly.

I pitied the officer with the *pince-nez;* he looked nervous and vacillating, and his lips twitched. One could see that the steps to the Corps Législatif were black with a palpitating throng. The Chamber was in session, but still the bridge was barred. There arrived upon the scène an unarmed battalion of National Guards, to make a peaceful demonstration, but the officer of gendarmes was firm for this once; he would not let them pass. A moment after I saw sabres flash in the sunshine. I ensconced myself behind a statue. I feared there was about to be a charge, and this was inviting ground for such a manœuvre, level and open, with few obstructions. The National Guards did not persevere; the officer had merely meant to frighten them, but one National Guard had somehow received a cut on the head, and his comrades swathing him with pocket-handkerchiefs, hoisted him on their shoulders, and carried him back towards the Rue de Rivoli

to employ him as a species of living appeal to conflict, a common artifice in French revolutions. But more battalions of the National Guard pressed on and the crowd got so near to the gendarmes, surrounding their horses, that opposition was out of the question. The cordon was broken through, and the multitude surged over the bridge. The Linesmen on duty at the Corps Législatif fraternised with the people, and held up the butts of their rifles in sign of amity. Amid a hurricane of tumults the dethronement of the Emperor was decreed, and the Third Republic ushered into existence to the sponsorship of a mad, uproarious, exultant rabble. A Provisional Government was improvised, and an adjournment made to the Hôtel de Ville. There was no effusion of blood, save that of the solitary National Guard, who had been taken away by his comrades, and he may have received his cut on the head from a fall.

While these scenes were being enacted the

Empress had made her escape from the Tuileries. She had traversed the side buildings by the river, until she reached the Gallery of the Louvre, and descended by the staircase opening on the passage opposite the Church of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois. There a friend called a carriage, and while she was preparing to enter, a street urchin recognised her, for all her simplicity of dress, and cried out: "Ha! there goes the woman Badinguette." * The Chevalier di Nigra, the Italian Ambassador, who was at hand, cuffed him soundly on the ears, while the hackney-coach drove off before any alarm could be raised. She took refuge in the house of a prosperous American dentist, named Evans, and got off by rail, under cover of darkness, to the west coast. The unhappy lady might have been maltreated, possibly killed, by some fanatic

* Badinguette, the female of Badinguet, a nickname given to the Emperor because of his *alias* when escaping from the prison-fortress of Ham.

in the novel excitement of licence; but I am disinclined to believe that she would have been regarded with other sentiments than compassionating respect by the great majority of the Parisians.

The Tuileries were entered by the mob from the garden side, but no resistance was offered. The troops were too few, and were disorganised by the news of the tremendous defeat of their comrades. Besides, it was too late. There never was revolution so bloodless, or so free from outrage. A few sergents-de-ville were kicked and scuffled by the roughs; a cocked hat was to be caught sight of stuck on the top of a broken lamp outside the Finance Ministry, and a boy flourished a broken sword as a trophy; but the sergents-de-ville vanished with the dynasty, and have not been ostentatiously manifest since. Doubtless, some of them might be detected by sharp observers later on the same day, with changed clothes, joining in the acclamations of

rejoicing Paris. The escutcheons over the shops of the upholsterers, jewellers, milliners, confectioners, *et hoc genus*, by appointment to the Imperial Court, who had been at such backstairs pains to procure the right to set them up, were taken down. If they had not been taken down, they would have been torn down. The first thought of the patriots was to liberate Rochefort and the other Press and political prisoners, their next to hammer the "N's" and eagles and other emblems of Imperialism out of the masonry of bridges and public buildings, and to daub "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," on the fronts of the churches. There was mirth and congratulations, cheering and singing of songs, drinking and dancing, and Paris made deliriously merry. And in the meantime the enemy was steadily advancing to the gates, and deliberately completing his preparations to crush it within his hug like a boa-constrictor.

I dined that evening in a restaurant off the Palais Royal. An aged army-surgeon was at the table next me. To his various demands the waiter answered, "Yes, citizen," "Presently, citizen," seeking to establish the purity of his Republicanism by sinking the ordinary courteous Monsieur. I could perceive how hard the old gentleman found it to keep his temper in check. As he was paying his bill, the waiter held out his hand for the customary *pour-boire*.

"Pardon me, citizen," emphasising the latter word, said the surgeon gravely, "we are all equal now; I could not think of insulting a brother Republican by the offer of a tip which would reduce him to the level of an inferior."

That waiter looked as if a new light had dawned upon him, and as if he did not quite appreciate such practical social equality.

Day by day the channels of intercourse with the provinces were closing, and there could be no

longer any doubt that Paris would have to stand a siege. Mr. Bowes was instructed to leave for some point where he would have uninterrupted communication with England, and to me was assigned the task of representing the *Standard* within the beleaguered city. When I say the task was assigned to me, perhaps I should be nearer the truth if I were to put it that I volunteered for it. A banking account was opened for me to a practically unlimited extent at the house of Blount, in the Rue Royale, the much-respected head of which acted as British Consul when Lord Lyons left. But though I had money at my command, I resolved to lay in no stock of provisions, but to live as the bulk of the population would have to live—from day to day as the commissariat permitted—rightly conceiving that only thus would I be enabled justly to appraise the deprivations endured, and set the proper value on the stubbornness of the resistance. On bidding

me good-bye, Mr. Bowes gave me as final warning to recollect always that I was a neutral, and on no account to join any of the military organisations in course of formation. As to the mode of corresponding with London, that was to be left for destiny.

One evening a meeting of the representatives of English newspapers was convened in a room in a hotel near the grand boulevard. Some twenty were present: Dr. Austin, of the *Times* (whom I had met at Metz), a travelling Fellow of Oxford; the Hon. Francis Lawley, another Fellow of Oxford, once private secretary to Mr. Gladstone, and member for Beverley, an excellent judge of a race-horse; the Hon. Lewis Wingfield, brother to Lord Powerscourt, a universal genius, who could make poetry, plays, and pictures; and Mr. Thomas Gibson Bowles, now of *Vanity Fair*, among others. The talk, which was desultory, mostly turned on the means of keeping up connection with the

outside world. I suggested pigeons, forgetting that pigeons will only fly to the cotes where they have been trained, and that if they were available for bringing back news when taken out and released at some reasonable distance in the vicinity, they were not available for conveying messages from Paris.

No definite conclusion was come to, and we had to dissolve as wise as we assembled, coming to the impotent conclusion that we should have to wait till something turned up. One squatly-built, cynical-looking gentleman monopolised the conversation, and what a conversationalist he was! How self-possessed and how ready with a shrewd biting humour. He made a deep impression on me.

"Who is that?" I asked of Captain Bingham.

"Don't you know?" he replied, surprised. "That is Henry Labouchere, one of the cleverest fellows in England."

My besotted ignorance of the great reputations of England may be conceived when I confess that the name conveyed no idea to my mind. I wish he had not been in Paris during the siege. He took the wind out of all our sails.

This may be the best place to explain how we were enabled to get out our letters when the strict investment had begun. A balloon-post was organised by the care of the Provisional Government, and private persons were allowed to avail themselves of it under certain conditions. Letters had to be of a limited size and weight. As it would be impossible to transmit in a single news letter an amplitude of detail, I had to make up my correspondence when any event of unusual importance occurred in a series of tiny packets. These were written on that thin tissue-paper known in France as onion-skin, and by the aid of my good friend and coadjutor, William O'Donovan, I could thus send off sometimes very full recitals of fruit-

less sorties, or of the evil doings of the enemy within Paris as they happened. My account of the battle of Champigny covered six columns of ordinary daily newspaper type. I used to scribble away at a breakneck rush on sheets of thick foolscap; O'Donovan, taking these from me, instinctively interpreted the scrawl, supplying omissions and toning the hasty excited sentences into quiet English—judiciously editing, in fact, not sub-editing—and with extraordinary neatness and expedition making a copy on the onion-skin. His handwriting was a veritable caligraphy. The minute yet legible and perfectly-formed characters reminded one of those artists who can inscribe the Lord's Prayer distinctly on their thumb-nails. Surely printers never were blessed with more exquisite manuscript. Some of these transcripts were carefully preserved as mementoes by the older members of the *Standard* staff when the compositors had done with them. The original

pothooks and hangers of my diary of the siege, complete, are in a box in a lumber-room under the eaves, and contain some letters which never appeared, for there was more than one hiatus in these communications from Paris. The post-bags of some of the balloons were lost over Norway, others were dropped into the German lines and confiscated, and one mail at least went to entertain the fishes. A letter of mine was picked up off the Cornish coast and forwarded by the local rector to Shoe Lane, where they had much trouble in deciphering it, soaked as it was with salt-water, which had caused the ink to spread. A remarkably shrewd notion took possession of the editor of the *Evening Standard*. In a previous letter I jocosely stated that if provisions continued to lessen, and the temperature to lower at the same rate much longer, I would seize an opportunity to flit by the earliest available balloon. This acute gentleman imagining, perhaps, that balloons in

Paris could be had as readily as cabs in London streets, concluded that I had left by the derelict air-ship, and that as we floated out to the mercy of the ocean I, with the boy-stood-on-burning-deck fidelity to duty, flung out my correspondence on the shores of England. I might perish, but the newspaper should not suffer! The theory was very pretty; the idea was no sooner conceived than executed, and the monster headlines on the placards, "Loss of our Paris Special in a Balloon," helped to sell an extra edition. As a stroke of business this was undeniably smart; otherwise it was hardly kindly or thoughtful, for our Paris Special had a sister ailing in a London suburb, and this piece of news coming on her with abrupt brutality would not have improved her bodily condition.

To make matters worse the military editor, a hard-working officer of the Guards, paid a touching and too eulogistic tribute to my memory. I trust I shall never have

occasion to return him the compliment. The late Mr. Morier Evans, who was then manager of the *Standard*, seeing the sensational line on the contents' bill in the City, at once sent a telegraphic message to my sister, bidding her take no heed of the paper, for that letters had been received from me since the report of my death had been published. This was a pious fraud in intention, but literally true, as I really was not killed that time. This was not the first occasion on which I had been numbered with the majority, and had had my shade appeased by the incense of newspaper praise. Just ten years previously there came a story that I had been hurled aloft, to come down by instalments, in the blow-up of an hospital at the bombardment of Ancona. The third time has the charm. When next some inventive journalist chooses to dismiss me to kingdom-come, I suppose the correct line of action to adopt, for the credit of the Press, will be to commit suicide.

Not all of my friends of the boarding-house years had left Paris. Captain Bingham I have spoken of already; the two sons of Madame Bonnery manfully tackled to the fighting trade—at least, as much of it as was vouchsafed to the National Guard to practise; and our great Irish painter, who was still in the *Pension*, set to work on street scenes illustrative of horrid war, and actually completed a gallery of thirty-six pictures, which were subsequently exhibited in the Sydenham Palace. William O'Donovan ate the bread of siege with myself; and Edmond, who had no fondness for even the spacious imprisonment of a leaguered capital, sought service outside the walls in the Foreign Legion, in which corps he gained rapid promotion.

O'H——, who was a Republican, was stirred up by his zeal for the solidarity of free peoples to offer his right arm to the French Republic in its struggle with the military bureaucracy of

Germany. He went to the recruiting depôt of the Guard in the Tuileries, to offer himself as a volunteer. He was welcomed, and made much of until the presiding officer asked what was his birthplace.

"Clonakilty," answered O'H——.

"Clona—Clona—what do you say? In what department is it?"

"In one of the maritime departments, South Cork," said the Irishman, unabashed.

"Never heard of it," continued the officer, looking at a map of France.

"You will not find it in that," said O'H——; "it is in Ireland."

"Why, then, you are a foreigner, and you want to creep into a French *corps d'élite*. Out with you. You should not be wasting my time. Join one of the free companies, or the Foreign Legion."

The Foreign Legion he joined, and met many

countrymen from other Irish departments, maritime and inland, in its ranks; but not O'Donovan, who was attached to a different battalion. Professor Mortimer escorted an English family to London, and started existence anew there. For the time being, his occupation was gone; no money was to be earned by teaching languages when the voice of the cannon was loud in the land.

To my care was handed over by a friend, who had left for other climes, a ground floor apartment in the Rue de Clichy, the street in which the modest mansion of a poet—yea, a true poet, Victor Hugo—and the Debtors' Prison, then turned into an ambulance, were situated. There I wrote and slept, and went through the motions of feasting sumptuously, and fretted and bore the gnawing agonies of neuralgia when I was not away on calls of duty, my companion being an aged housekeeper, an Austrian lady with a title, who had two aversions after the devil—Prussia and the Republic.

But as she would speak German—she could not speak anything else—she got no proper respect for her animosity to the enemy; and succeeded in covering me with unjust suspicions, which were not allayed by the venomous pertinacity with which the Baronin von L—— hissed at the Phrygian-capped figure on the newly-struck coinage. But, at last, even the annoyances caused by the errors of the over-patriotic, who would dog my footsteps and sometimes bring about my arrest, ceased to be a plague; they helped to vary the deadly monotony of hunger, grief, and heart-sickening disappointment. The English-speaking colony left, the English paper stopped publication, the British Embassy cleared out of the Rue Saint Honoré—all, except a fat porter, who might as well have gone with his betters, since the Britishers in Paris were not granted the favour of carving him into rations. There was a second exodus of British "useless

mouths," by grace of the besiegers, after the investment had been fairly completed. It has sometimes amused me since to hear those babblers who were released so early enlarge on the horrors they had had to pass through, when they really escaped before the afflictions that try men's souls —physical and moral—had descended upon the doomed city. By the vast majority of those who stood by the ship to the bitter end, these were borne without a murmur.

It was my privilege—I suppose I may so esteem it now—to have spent the four tedious months of the siege shut up in the penitential cage. My sufferings were never acute, but they were real and progressive, and of that numbing kind which lowers vitality without the compensating sense that one is acting heroic acts and storing up recollections that will be sweet in after days. My feeling now, when a term of fourteen years has elapsed, is still strong and

vivid that the beleaguerment was long and trying and irksome and depressing. Still I would not have missed the experience. It is something historic to recall. But I vowed, as I was loosed from the toils—and I mean to keep the vow if I can—that I should not lightly be caught in a similar trap, without adequate substantial reward. I had been in a besieged town once before, but that siege was brief and lively. Here there was a grating sameness of lengthened misery—cold, privation, baffled hope, and an awful tenebrousness of horizon. The ribs of the frame were visible through the flesh. To one who was a foreigner it was Purgatory. To a Frenchman, who sipped the gall to the dregs, it must have been Inferno. I was buoyed up by the consciousness that I was doing my duty, and that I was there of my own free will. I do not complain of semi-starvation and the infirmities it brought on; I suppose it would be manlier

to forget such trials, as others (who did not suffer them) have forgotten them, but nature will not permit me sometimes. It is not surprising that a diet of horseflesh—six days' rations of which I have devoured raw between the butcher's and my residence—of garbage, and mahogany-hued bread, in which bran and sand were more plentiful than flour, is apt to derange the stomach after weeks of repetition. I went into that siege a strong man; I came out of it haggard and hysterical, with pinched features and a bodily constitution which still bears the traces of the too heavy strain put upon it. I believe it took a morsel out of my life, for I vegetated as one subsisting from hand to mouth during the weary ordeal; but at least I have the satisfaction of knowing that my bald diary of the haps of that lugubrious winter was rigidly truthful.

During that "terrible year," as Hugo called it, military aptitude was not the only gift which

once made France illustrious, that seemed to have departed from it. With the generals who compelled victories disappeared the wits who often robbed defeat of its sting. The epigram that recalled Martial was to be sought in the libraries not in life; all that remained of Rabelais was his filth, of Voltaire his ill-nature. The artistic sureness which sent the satire home as truly as the bullet fired by the Queen's prize-man at a Wimbledon target had fled, may have been wandering in the shades with Gavarni. *Charivari* degenerated into the feeblest of buffoonery; if there was an occasional gleam that struck one as brilliant, it was only because the light was thrown out by a leaden background. These unexpected spurts of radiance were like the lucid intervals which sometimes break the dulness of pottering second childhood. With the wit went the chivalry; and wit never runs so smoothly as when harnessed with chivalry.

In the years when "*Mon Dieu, mon Roi, ma femme*" was a cry more common in France, satire did not habitually assail those weak by sex or misfortune. Women, unhappy women, above all, were respected. "Hit a man when he is down" may be an excellent maxim in a faction-fight, but it is hardly the principle that the people should go on who boast themselves to be the most *spirituel* in the world, the people of the *troubadours* and *trouvères*, the people priding in the memory of Bayard and treasuring up the saying of Louis XII: "The King of France must not remember the injuries offered to the Duke of Orleans." The crushing blows that came down upon France with sledge-hammer force and quickness after the defeat of Wissemburg might have excused a savage spleen towards the ex-Emperor. One could understand that a man who surrendered with an army stronger by fifty thousand than his uncle commanded at Marengo would not be popular with a nation

which sang pæans of triumph by anticipation. Failure is ever inclined to be illogical. And, in sooth, it *was* brain-maddening to have Paris begirt with Prussians within two months of the rampant shout, "To Berlin!" having been raised on the boulevards. But after making every allowance for that, the deposed and interned Emperor was visited with a measure of hatred so severe that it almost bred a reaction in his favour in the breasts of men who never admired his policy. And not only was the Emperor thus treated, but the son, the husband, and the father! Among the caricatures published in broad sheets and exposed for sale in the kiosks, but one that I can recollect was redeemed by any scintilla of cleverness. Louis Napoléon was pictured presenting his sword, hilt uppermost, to the King of Prussia, and underneath was written:

> Voici le sabre, le sabre de *mon oncle*,
> Tu peux le mettre à ton côté.

As for the rest, the most charitable verdict which

can be pronounced on them is, that they were stupid when they were not obscene or profane. Very small proportion of these daubs could be left on a table where a modest woman or a child might enter. To the shame of the austere Republic these contemptible indecencies were tolerated; hawkers carried them about or pinned them up on the walls. The Breton at the head of the governing council was a pious man; his associates turned up the whites of their eyes at the gross immorality of the Imperial Court. Yet they could not find it in them to suppress this lewd purulence of the pencil. This was one of the blackest blots on the escutcheon of beleaguered Paris. The attitude of the city, in the face of peril, hardship, and humiliation, was really dignified. There were weaknesses, it is true, but in the main it was orderly, resigned, and resolute. The sadder the pity that this filthy licence should have been permitted.

Not one member of the Government that busied itself changing the names of streets could make leisure to raise his voice in the interests of public morality. Description dare not be given of those caricatures which were obscene; the Holywell Street that was would be ashamed of them; but some faint notion of their wickedness may be formed if one that was simply profane is inspected. Every amateur recollects the celebrated "Flight into Egypt." Well, Louis Napoléon in a Mexican sombrero was represented, in a parody of the master's work, leading an ass on which his son was seated, in the guise of the Divine Infant. The poor Empress was not forgotten. This thing sold. Scoffing, scurrilous Paris laughed; but many of the Mobiles from the provinces, especially those from Brittany, gazed on them aggrieved, and moved away with downcast looks of reproach and questioning wonderment. As for the scratchings which appealed

directly either to the lecherous or irreverent, they swamped the market. I often thought they must have been produced by engravers' apprentices in a drunken frolic. Still, they might have been useful under certain circumstances. There were a great many artists in the invading army. If those cuts were sprung upon them at the right moment, had they a particle of taste left, they must have run helter-skelter as if pelted by Greek fire.

The printing press also lent itself to the unmanly exercise of kicking the prostrate. I do not speak of the newspapers of the "Père Duchesne" school now, but of the more ambitious literature which developed itself in stitched wrappers. For two sous, a pamphlet was to be bought, entitled "La Femme Bonaparte," under which pleasantly familiar name the lady who had been for eighteen years the patroness of every charitable undertaking in France, was

designed. The pamphlet had its epigraph as the Borgia had armorial bearings. This was taken from a *chanson populaire*, which had as much existence in reality as those "old songs" from which Scott selected the headings of his chapters. The ballads of the people stigmatised the Empress as a Messalina perfected by the accomplishments of a thief. The writer, who veiled his name, traced the genealogy of his heroine, giving her for father the late Lord Clarendon. The printer of this vile production was one Paul Jacquet, of 11, Faubourg Montmartre. The second chapter—if there were pastilles to overcome a moral stench I should have lit one after reading it; as it was, I sighed that the writer was not near Barclay's draymen and a town pump. While this offensive stuff, which was only to be touched with tongs, was trailed about the thoroughfares, the "guardians of public peace" sauntered along, pipe in mouth, paying no heed.

They only laughed when one vendor of the papers found at the Tuileries tried a joke and cried out, "La Correspondance de la famille *infernale*" instead of "Impériale." Was not the correspondence edited by a committee appointed by the Provisional Government which, in its loving regard for the State, did not shrink from publishing the intimate letters of a wife to her husband full of the sacred expansiveness of affection?

* * * *

I am nearing the end of my appointed space, not having exhausted my budget of recollections by a great deal; in truth, having barely arrived at the outset of my career as Special Correspondent. I should like to tell what afterwards befell many of those friends and acquaintances whom I have introduced to the reader, and present to him others from the same stock. Many, alas! most of them, are dead; some died in a way the chronicles will not readily let perish, and I own

I would like to put on the record honestly how they comported themselves, in justice to them and in acquittal of a long-cherished wish of my own.

Narratives have been given of the siege of Paris. I think I have something new on the subject to say, and on the Commune, of which I had personal knowledge, I know I have something unexpected to say—something which may aid in placing the conduct of the men engaged in one of the most remarkable movements of this century in fairer light before the student who is mainly solicitous to hear the sober truth.

After the great troubles of France had soothed down it was my lot, in the turn of my vocation, to have witnessed many strange sights, to have been like Æneas,

——et terris jactatus et alto,

and as I kept my eyes open, I am so bold as to

think that out of my brain-crannies I might be able to pick the material of another book—who knows?—perhaps of yet another book again, like a *prima donna* retiring from the stage. But, in my case, as in the *prima donna's*, these farewells, and last farewells, and positively last farewells, all depend on the public, and are made in obedience to its beck. If the public is in the humour of Oliver Twist, and asks for more, the Writer (with a capital "W," my assiduous type-setter, now that he is about to ease you) is in the humour of Barkis; he is willing, if God but spare him life and leisure.

Not to lose the opportunity of crying his wares—this is the age of push and salvage sales—he may state that amongst other varied and extensive experiences in that assortment on the shelf, he is prepared to show some unique articles in the way of Dutch *fêtes*, and eke some of Old England, a Gipsy Parliament, a few rare pictures

from Italy (warranted by masters of some renown, at least in their own parishes), a Swedish Coronation, a Vienna Exhibition, and a Carlist campaign, a game at iron nine-pins with the Irreconcileables of Murcia, an Indian famine (rather a damaged specimen), a not altogether agreeable picnic in Cyprus, and an entirely agreeable picnic in Canada, with sundry smaller pieces of merchandise thrown in as premium to customers.

And now, good Reader mine, the word that must be, the sound which makes us linger. From me it is syllabled in warmth and gratitude, for your patience has been given me; but for you it remains to decide whether the syllables shape out "*Adieu*" or "*Au Revoir*," a friendly "Good-bye" or a cheerful "To our next meeting!"

THE END.

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